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RUSSIA



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RUSSIA

BY WALTER DURANTY,

*Selected and arranged by*

GUSTAVUS TUCKERMAN, JR., NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

*with a personal note on the author*

*by Alexander Woollcott*

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## A PERSONAL NOTE ON WALTER DURANTY

BY ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT

WHEN, in the last weeks of 1933, the United States Government got around at long last to recognizing, with a perceptible start, the large and obstinate fact called the Soviet Union, this historic gesture, so reminiscent from some viewpoints of an ostrich removing its silly head from the sand, was duly celebrated in the sinful citadel of New York by a banquet at the Waldorf-Astoria. On that occasion, in the name of the Russian-American Chamber of Commerce, some seventeen hundred interested parties sat down together and consumed, as a matter of habit and as a matter of course, such an amount of costly groceries as would have surprised and dangerously distended twice that many Muscovite stomachs. After the coffee, Washington's recent approach to realism in international affairs was inevitably celebrated, also, by a certain amount of speech-making, and it fell to Raymond Robins to call the honor-roll of those who had done most to make possible the *rapprochement* just effected. For each name in the roll, whether Russian or American, there was polite applause from the seventeen hundred, but the one really prolonged pandemonium was evoked by the mention of a little Englishman who was an amused and politely attentive witness of these festivities. Indeed, one quite got the impression that America, in a spasm of discernment, was recognizing both Russia and Walter Duranty.

This tribute to the latter filled me with what might well be called, I think, illegitimate pride. When Duranty brought Litvinov to Washington and then, on sailing away again, took with him in his dispatch case our first ambassador to Moscow, I was dimly conscious of feeling a glow of personal triumph, which was odd because in all this I had really played no part at all. Sternly examined, this glow could find no justification save in the vanity of my connoisseurship in people. As some affect to

know a painting from a daub or one vintage from another, I do pretend to clairvoyance about human beings.

When in the spring of 1914 I made my first voyage abroad and sat for a time at the feet of such great folk as Barrie and Chesterton and the elder Guitry, the man who most impressed me, as I now take pride in recalling, was none of these more conspicuous gentry but rather a scatterbrained young ne'er-do-well whom I first encountered on the *terrasse* of the Closerie des Lilas. That was Duranty. But all I really recognized then was his pre-eminence in the lost art of conversation. It used to be a point of warm agreement between the late William Bolitho and myself that, in our wanderings around the world, we had met up with no other man who could make a purposeless hour at some sidewalk café so memorably delightful. Unlike most celebrated talkers, Duranty also listens well. Indeed, I am suddenly visited by a dark suspicion that Bolitho's and my enthusiasm for Duranty's conversation was derived in some measure from the fact that he pays anyone he is with an exquisitely considerate attention. In his company one rediscovers that, just as the neglected fine art of listening is half the secret of good acting, so it is the whole secret—all there is, really—of good manners.

But I cannot pretend that in the young Duranty of that ominous June, I even dimly foresaw the considerable personage he has since become. It would have required an extraordinary prescience to prophesy that this courteous but flighty and effervescent little English expatriate, with a faint air of skullduggery about him, would one day become our most profoundly respected envoy in Europe. It should be remembered that, at that time, he had been a newspaper man for little more than six months. To be sure, he was even then on the staff of the *Times*, but, in the days before the War had made this country uncomfortably aware of Europe, the post of Paris correspondent, as I have elsewhere remarked, was an inconsiderable one. That office was only a dingy garret up five flights of stairs in the Rue Louis le Grand and it was a rare day when the chief had anything

more important with which to make the cables hum than a description of Mrs. Jackson Gouraud's gown at Longchamp. And Duranty, mind you, was merely assistant to the correspondent, at a salary, I think, of a louis a week.

It was his job to wait up every morning long enough to see the first edition of the *Matin*, and also to go on sundry out-of-town assignments. The first of these to come his way, believe it or not, was an interview (through the bars of the jail at Romorantin) with Ferdinand Pinney Earle. If, despite so orthodox a début, I attached scant importance to his prospects as a newspaper man, it was because I knew that, ever since his exit from Cambridge seven years before (Duranty and Hugh Walpole were at Emmanuel together), he had merely drifted from port to port, seeing life and making love. It was a fly-by-night, New York-to-Marseilles, hand-to-mouth existence, financed by occasional jobs of pumping Latin into some bird-brain son of the rich, occasional stories sold to Mr. Munsey's *Argosy*, occasional lucky shots at the Derby and the Grand Prix. It was the kind of vagabondage I thought of as more beloved when confined to the pages of W. J. Locke, for I had been brought up in a world where each youth was supposed to hurry from college to the bottom rung of some ladder and climb same until he died of exhaustion. I was not seasoned enough then to realize that Duranty was taking a more fruitful post-graduate course in the humanities than anyone I knew.

Then he himself seemed to think of his journalistic career as impermanent. Even as I left Paris that year, he was going into dubious cahoots with one Arthur Cravan, a Latin Quarter character who was said to be a nephew of Oscar Wilde and who, when in his cups, claimed an even closer relationship. The plan was to raise a little money by exploiting this pretty fellow as a boxer, and I remember the night at the Bal Bullier when Duranty went among the dancers distributing yellow hand-bills which proclaimed the début of the "*neveu du feu Oscar Wilde*" with the legend "*On parlera, on chantera, on boxera.*" With the



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receipts they would then proceed to Bucharest for a really profitable match. To ensure its being profitable these big dreamers planned to introduce Cravan there as Bombardier Wells, and the idea was to leave town before the aggrieved Rumanians discovered their error. Skullduggery, indeed.

Well, the War put an end to all that nonsense. Cravan, who was eventually shot, I believe, while swimming the Rio Grande, vanishes from the story. The War picked Duranty up by the scruff and, to the grumbling frustration of the British recruiting office, turned him into a war correspondent, attached (not very deeply) to the French armies. Then came his long, close, enriching comradeship with Bolitho. It was a partnership of the spirit, without counterpart in his life until more recently his path crossed that of an erstwhile milkman from Austin, Texas, who rejoices—at least I suppose he rejoices—in the name of Hubert Renfro Knickerbocker and who, as a roving journalist, also enjoys that rarity, the deep respect of Walter Duranty. These two are great friends and, as it happens, that piece of fiction whereby Duranty won the O. Henry Memorial Prize a few years ago was actually written by Knickerbocker. But that is another story.

It was several years after the War that a railroad wreck on the road to Havre cost him a foot, not only subduing his *Wanderlust* but, thanks to the indemnity wrung from the French government, turning him into a man of property with a subtly different point of view. Finally chance and his own questing spirit took him to Moscow and set him down before the most momentous experiment in human history.

Recently in Baltimore the men of the *Sun* gave a luncheon for Duranty and listened to his talk about the Soviets. Afterwards one guest said that, whereas he had enjoyed hearing the fellow talk, he had heard nothing which altered his own previously formed impressions about the mobile experiment. That, however, was not surprising to one who stopped to think it was by Duranty, probably, that those impressions had been formed.

## Preface

DURING the past twelve years I have written for the *New York Times* a great many words about Soviet Russia. Not all of them were wise and not all of them were accurate, because it is hard for a foreign reporter to paint a true picture of the life of any country, and harder still when conditions are as strange and unfamiliar as here. The most one can do is to write the story from day to day as one sees it, without fear or prejudice. In this I am particularly fortunate to have been given from the outset by the *New York Times* complete freedom in my handling of "news." Nevertheless, when a year ago my friend Mr. Gustavus Tuckerman suggested that it might be possible to compile from my articles and dispatches a book that would define the process of Soviet development through these years of rapid change, I was frankly skeptical. He refused to be discouraged and, it seems to me, has succeeded in making a mosaic with a clear central design out of a vast number of isolated fragments. For which I am deeply grateful.

I also wish to thank the *New York Times* for the trust it has placed in me and for permission to reproduce my work in this book.

WALTER DURANTY.

*Moscow, December 17, 1933.*



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Introduction:

Fifteen Years of Soviet Power



## FIFTEEN YEARS OF SOVIET POWER

(*Sunday Magazine Article, November 6, 1932.*)

ANNIVERSARIES, for some reason, are dear to the Bolshevik heart. Perhaps it is that the regime is still young, so that each repetition of the day it began existence is a cause for rejoicing, as children rejoice over their birthday. Or perhaps—to go back further for the cause—it is a Russian trait, and the enthusiasm with which Russians used to greet their “saint’s day” or “name day” has been transferred to a more secular and universal celebration.

This year, in particular, the anniversary becomes more impressive because it is coupled with the mystic number five; further, coincidence with the conclusion of the Five-Year Plan gives the fifteenth anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution a quite unusual significance. Finally, to gild the occasion with additional luster, 1932 may be said to mark the completion of the framework of that socialist order at which the revolution was aimed.

The building itself is far from complete, but the steel framework which will hold the finished edifice of socialism can now be seen in stark outline against the eastern sky. Finance, industry and transportation, public health and recreation, art and science, commerce, agriculture—every branch of national life is fitted to the arbitrary pattern of collective effort for collective benefit, instead of individual effort for individual profit.

In a sense, therefore, the fifteenth anniversary, more than its predecessors, is their heir and culmination, although, as I shall show later, it, too, has not wholly thrown off the growing pains, or “infantile maladies,” as Lenin called them, by which they



were afflicted. Conceived in exile and born in strife, the Soviet state has had a stormy existence, menaced by enemies at home and abroad, and continually faced by the less palpable but still more difficult problem of changing human habits and methods—one might almost say human nature itself—to suit its own novel and rigid principles.

To do the Bolsheviki justice, history will show—does indeed show already for those who care to study the records of the first days of the revolution—that they were willing to advance much more slowly and make far greater compromise with the old order than the world in general, or the Bolsheviki themselves for that matter, nowadays can realize. Right at the outset they offered to leave the personnel of government departments more or less intact under Bolshevik control and supervision; one of the unintentionally comic moments of that initial period was provided by the staff of the Foreign Office, from department chiefs to scrub-women, when they walked out on their new commissar, the brilliant Trotsky, with all the dignity of superannuated dodos, saying that they could no longer deign to collaborate with a “Jewish upstart”—they who had supported without blenching the traitorous rogueries of the Rasputin period and the inane magniloquence of Kerensky and his “romantic revolution.” Their example was followed in other departments, in banks, business offices, and industrial organizations. For the time being, it seemed, the Bolsheviki had the upper hand—let “decent people” leave them alone to stew in their own juice.

Characteristically, Lenin met this boycott aggressively. The “decent people” were replaced by a motley horde whose only merits were loyalty and enthusiasm; for their qualifications, save for a few leaders, were virtually nil. One after another of the government departments—law courts and judiciary, banks and factories—were “nationalized,” that is, taken over by ignorant but willing workers from the former executives who refused

co-operation. Loyalty and enthusiasm were the twin foundations on which Lenin built his state.

It is true that the "decent people" had excuse for lacking either, as far as the Soviet power was concerned. In the cities and towns their apartments and homes were being invaded by rough creatures from the lower depths who, having been born and having spent their lives in the filthy promiscuity of shack or tenement, could not understand why one family should need more than one room and acted accordingly.

In the country other rough creatures challenged the landlords' right of possession to stately châteaux, sleek herds, and widespread acreage. And in the army the roughest creatures of all, hardened and embittered by the most brutal of military systems, shot their high-born officers or stripped them naked and chased them out into the winter night. I believe that the Bolshevik offer to let the "decent people" remain if they cared to co-operate was genuine enough, but the circumstances were such that, even had they accepted, the position of most of them would soon have been impossible. Neither the Bolshevik leaders nor the Bolshevik party could wholly control the tempest they had conjured up from the vast depths of Russia.

It was then, I think, that Lenin and his associates—certainly one of them, a quiet, unobtrusive man named Stalin, who saw much but said little—began to realize that the main job before them and their revolution was to train and discipline and give self-respect to a nation of liberated slaves; in short, that the long, slow grind of education would mean more in the final issue than loyalty, however devoted, or enthusiasm, however intense. But it was then, too, that Lenin made the sole grave mistake of his brief and effulgent career. A natural mistake, a mistake which, with the information at his disposal, might be called inevitable, yet a mistake which nearly wrecked his revolution and set obstacles in its path that have not been removed to this day.

Lenin, whose special genius was the accurate gauging of facts, for once gauged wrongly. He looked at the bloody map of the World War and weighed opposing forces in the balance. He saw America, now at war six months, represented by a few tens of thousands of soldiers on French soil. He saw Germany moving troops from her eastern front to risk another throw in the west. He balanced that against German submarines, and found that his equation canceled out to zero, to stalemate, to month after dreary month of useless slaughter, to increased pressure upon soldiers and civil populations of the warring nations until at last they could bear it no longer, until they should follow Russia's example and revolt. It was logical and sound to reason thus, and to go further: to issue immediately an appeal to the masses to waste no more time or blood, to revolt now, without delay. They might not listen, but as the pressure increased . . . it was inevitable. Sooner or later world revolution would break the murderous stalemate.

America broke it instead. Whoever may claim to have won the war or done the greater services toward winning it, the facts are clear, the facts which Lenin for once failed to estimate correctly, the salient essential fact that American intervention on the side of the Allies broke the stalemate and ended the war with a victory so sudden as to leave victors and vanquished incredulous. Instead of perishing in its own holocaust, as Marx had predicted, world capitalism had won through to peace by the strong hand of its youngest and favorite son. Too late now for the beaten peoples to lend ear to Lenin's appeal, too late for red flags in Budapest or Munich, or Red machine guns under Berlin's linden trees! The vanquished must pay, and payment means money. Overnight the enemy became revolution and the Bolsheviki its prophets.

Instantly the whole gigantic machine of war-time propaganda was set working again at top speed. The Bolsheviki were Anti-christ and anathema, outlaws excommunicate, enemies of God

and man. The force of Czechoslovak patriots on Russian soil was bribed and bamboozled into forming the spearhead of attack against the Soviet, to give the signal for counter-revolutionary armies to spring up like mushrooms, supported at first by Allied gold and munitions, soon by Allied soldiers and Allied warships. Lenin had challenged capitalism and decreed its ruin, but capitalism was not ruined and met his challenge.

True, the Soviet emerged victorious from the civil war, thanks once again to loyalty and enthusiasm, but thanks still more to the corruption and incapacity of its adversaries and the conflicting policies of their "Allied" supporters. Then, when the game seemed won, a new storm of Polish invasion, which lent the added spur of nationalist hate to Bolshevik resistance. The Poles were thrown back to the very gates of Warsaw, and although the Soviet army cracked in turn it had freed Russian soil and retained enough energy to fling itself savagely a few months later upon Wrangel, the last hope of the "decent people" and their friends abroad, and chase him down from Perekop through the Crimea and out into the sea.

The Soviet was victorious, but the cost had been terrific. The land had been stripped of men and horses and food; the peasants were sullen and dispirited, the cities hungry and exhausted. Finance was a slough of worthless paper currency, industry a glacier of cold furnaces and frozen wheels, transport a trickle of filthy box-cars, and commerce a fog where furtive "bagmen" cheated and squabbled for crumbs and remnants. Communism was victorious—in common misery.

Lenin met the occasion. By sheer force of personality and the fearless marshaling of facts that was his outstanding quality, he compelled his followers to realize that the militant communism which the war period had required was premature and exaggerated; that for the time being it must be abandoned; that socialism must retreat to prepare for a further advance. The retreat he called NEP (New Economic Policy), which seemed

indeed not retreat but surrender, and was so interpreted not only by the outer world but by some communists and many others in Russia. Lenin and those nearest to him said: No, not surrender but a temporary withdrawal, a tactical maneuver. "*Nous reculons pour mieux sauter.*" And Lenin was right.

The introduction of Nep is a further indication that Lenin had not intended to attempt the establishment of a full-fledged communist state without the due period of education and preparation that such a change would involve. Sabotage and boycott by the former upper classes and the exigencies of the civil war had compelled the Bolsheviki to advance more rapidly than Lenin considered wise. Apart from the exhausted state of the country and the dissatisfaction of the peasants, Lenin had sound reason to restore for a time much of what had been hurriedly destroyed. At that, his New Economic Policy retained the essential features of socialism—that is, control and management of finance, industry, transport, and the important monopoly of foreign trade.

What shocked his followers was the freedom it gave to private commerce, but recently banned and punished as "speculation," and the consequent opportunity for private enterprise to create accumulations of capital, which would later, it was feared, provide it with a wedge to split the state domination of industry and finance. The rest of the New Economic Policy—restoration of money wages with different rates according to capacity and performance; extra pay for overtime, and, in some branches, the reappearance of the piece-work system; revival of payments for rent, railroad, and street-car travel, and the replacement of the food requisitions by a graduated tax in kind—consisted of little more than normal measures of peace-time reconstruction.

Even the freedom given to individuals or groups to undertake small-scale industrial production and sell their products for their own profit roused little more than anxiety lest they

might compete unfairly with state industry, a risk which was countered by a minimum-wage scale and by firmly enforced orders that private employers must provide their employees with working clothes, in some cases with housing and other facilities, and in addition pay their social insurance.

But the fear of private capital accumulations was ever present and, as soon became evident, not unjustified. For the first three years of Nep—1921-1924—private business increased by leaps and bounds, and the “Nepmen,” as they were called, showed amazing ingenuity in evading government control and taxation alike. For every graft scandal or collusion in tax-evasion by state officials that was unearthed and punished—and there were plenty—scores of evasions flourished with impunity, and there were built up in private hands fortunes that would rank as respectable in a capitalistic country.

Nevertheless, Nep accomplished the task appointed for it by restarting the wheels of industry and trade and restoring the supply of food and consumers' goods. Even its more abhorrent manifestations—the gambling hells, night cabarets, and smart restaurants that in 1923 gave Moscow a brief vision of past “gayety”—provided the city in that single year with \$2,000,000 in gold for the much-needed repair of streets, houses, water and gas mains, and other municipal activities. Bolsheviki might scowl at this “bourgeois luxury” and expel from their ranks the backsliding comrades who succumbed to its allurements, but it brought money into the city treasury, just as did the rest of Nep's activities, from raising chickens to opening new factories.

By 1925, however, Nep had served its purpose. The state had re-established a stable currency; both food and goods were plentiful, at least in comparison with the short commons of the preceding ten years; and it had become apparent to the Bolshevik leaders that if they really intended to form a socialist state, as they did intend with fanatic fervor, something must be done to check capital accumulations by Nepmen, no less than

the steady growth of a prosperous peasant class, the "kulaks," or labor-employing farmers.

The four years 1925-1928 were chiefly devoted to the former task, although it is significant that one of the chief points of controversy in the savage intraparty struggle, which then raged among the Bolsheviks, concerned the question of expropriating the kulaks. Both sides were agreed that the kulaks required extermination as a class, and only quarreled about the right method and right moment.

If 1923 had been a year of glory and gayety for the Nepmen, 1927 and 1928 were years of woe. If the taxes and other forms of legalized pressure in the previous two years had proved ineffective, the unhappy private trader was now confronted by the poisoned barb of retroactive taxation, against which there was no appeal. By this means the private accumulations were ruthlessly confiscated; the ground was cut away from under the Nepman's feet, leaving him the alternatives of submission, which meant ruin, or flight, which might mean death. To my knowledge, more than one bold citizen risked the latter course and lived to tell the tale.

By the middle of 1928 it was patently clear that Lenin had been right in saying that Nep was a temporary expedient; clear, too, that the Bolshevik rulers in the Kremlin, now purged of controversy under the energetic leadership of Joseph Stalin, were fully determined to build a truly socialist state. Their resolve found expression in the Five-Year Plan, which might be called the blueprint of the socialist edifice to be erected. This elastic and much-modified program—at first ordained to begin on October 1, 1928, and terminate on September 30, 1933, and later, after eighteen months of success, altered to end on December 31, 1932, the so-called "Five-Year Plan in Four"—was neither more nor less than the guide manual toward the establishment of a practical socialist system; but it is interesting to note that its original conception approached the kulak prob-

lem with no small degree of caution, requiring that less than one-third of the land under cultivation should be "collectivized" (that is, socialized) by the end of 1933.

It soon appeared, however, that such gradual procedure was impossible. Kulak resistance to rural socialization was bitter and, in that first year, bloody. By the autumn of 1929 the rural issue was clearly defined—collectivization must fail or the kulak must go—no middle measures were conceivable. For three years the struggle raged with heavy loss in live stock, with reduced production of homecraft goods that meant so much to rural Russia; in closed markets, with loss of human happiness and even lives. But by the spring of 1932 the kulaks were beaten, and three-quarters of the land under cultivation was won to the "socialized sector," as it is called.

Meanwhile, private commerce was suppressed throughout the country—finance, industry, and transport were wholly socialist and an immense new wave of construction swept over the vast territory of the U.S.S.R. Industrialization, electrification, collectivization—those were the lengthy watch-words of the new era. What matter if here or there accomplishments fell short of program (30 or even 50 percent short in some cases); were not these shortcomings atoned for by over-program gains elsewhere? Despite shortcomings, the Five-Year Plan had succeeded, the socialist framework had been erected.

That, I believe, is true, but who can live in a skyscraper that is still naked steel-girders? The frame is there; perhaps one might say the lower stories, too, are finished, and some patch-work floors and walls installed higher still. But they are not comfortable to live in; the strain of building has been gigantic, and its cost far greater than the builders had intended. In the U.S.S.R. today there are shortages of everything—of food, of labor and technical skill, of materials, of the most elementary comforts (an American would say necessities) of life.

In most respects the socialist framework is solid and sure;



there is no loss of determination among the leaders, no sign that the nation, though it sweats and grumbles under its burden, has any thought of revolt or unwillingness to continue the work. The weakest link of the socialist chain is merchandising and distribution; if this can be strengthened, present difficulties will be overcome. Upon it the Kremlin has wisely concentrated attention. The Kremlin's immediate objective, as recently announced by the resolutions voted at the plenary session of Bolshevik leaders, is to increase the supply of foodstuffs and consumers' goods and stimulate their mutual exchange.

Meanwhile, the whole nation is acquiring knowledge and learning its new tasks with frantic eagerness. Times are hard and will not be easy in the near future; progress may be slower than anticipated, the goal more remote. But unless untoward and unforeseen circumstances intervene, I, for one, cannot doubt the issue or question the ultimate success of socialist building in the U.S.S.R.

# I

## Russia Under Lenin



## THE FAMINE AND AMERICAN RELIEF

Moscow, *September 30, 1921*.—One of the strangest features of Russian life today is the wanderers—wandering children, wandering soldiers, wandering families, wandering villages, wandering tribes—driven from their homes by the war or revolution to move interminably across the vast Russian plains.

This ceaseless tide of migration has become not the least serious of the problems the Soviet government is called upon to face. Normally it makes immense demands upon the over-worked transportation system. Under the influence of such an abnormal condition as the Volga famine it assumes the proportion of a national danger. For unlike their nomadic ancestors who wandered over the steppes in horsedrawn caravans the modern Russian wanderers travel mostly by train. There are thousands, even tens of thousands, of families who have had no home save a freight car for three, four, or five years, just changing one car for another when the first wore out or appeared to be permanently sidetracked.

This migration was first started by the German advance in 1915, when millions of the inhabitants of Poland swept eastward with the Tsar's retreating army. The German advance into the Ukraine and up through the Baltic provinces in 1917 and 1918 set moving a wave of humanity. Wholesale abandonment of the front by the soldiers in the same period sent countless streams trickling across Russia. Each flow and ebb of counter-revolutionary fighting uprooted thousands more until it seemed the whole nation was on the move.

The new rights of the peasants, workers, and soldiers after the Bolshevik revolution included free transport, and even the

districts untouched by foreign or civil warfare went forth to enjoy a wholesale joy-ride in trains, of which some had barely heard.

By the end of 1918 the Bolshevik rulers realized what the movement meant to transportation. Every railroad expert in the country pointed out the harm done by thus tying up cars urgently needed for freight traffic at a time when repairs were long and difficult. Since then every effort has been made to check the migration and settle the wanderers on the land.

Gradually the majority did come to a halt, but hundreds of thousands remained without homes. Thus the panic migration from the famine in the early summer was a movement not of the regular inhabitants but of the population of Poles, White Russians, Galicians, and others from Russia's western borders who settled in the Volga region after their flight before the Germans and are now trying to return to their former homes. In tens of thousands the nomadic habit seems permanently implanted, either by reversion to ancestral custom or by the force of circumstances. Right from the Latvian border—where there is a tribe of wandering Jews who have been shuttlecocked across the country in the last two years in an apparently hopeless attempt to reach their Lithuanian home—down to the border of Astrakhan, the traveler by rail meets wanderers at every stopping point whose only aim in life seems to be to get to somewhere somehow.

Most of them do not know where they are going or why, but they are none the less eager for all that to risk their necks on the buffers of engines and footboards of coaches or endure stuffy discomfort packed forty in a compartment meant to hold fourteen.

Among the ex-soldiers there are thousands who have literally lost their way home. Unable to read or write, all they knew when they left the front in 1917 was that they came from a village named, say, Woodville. On inquiry they found there

were perhaps a hundred Woodvilles in Russia and they have been searching for their own vainly ever since.

I met one such near Sizran, who cried bitterly as he related his hopeless search for his wife and children.

"My village has a big white church with a blue dome," he said, "but I have visited seven such in the last three years, none of which was the right one. Twice I was taken for the Red Army. Once I deserted and now I am demobilized. But I will go on looking for my people till I find them or die."

Asked how he lived he said he did odd jobs of work here and there or bought a sack of flour or vegetables in a village where food was cheap and sold it in a town for higher prices.

The recent introduction of railroad fares has curtailed but not checked the wanderers. At Samara I saw a stubborn old woman, who had been pulled off a platform under an oil tank by soldiers, wait until the train was moving, then suddenly jump up and depart triumphantly, despite the loss of the largest of her three bundles. It seems quite impossible to hold the wandering children who attach themselves to groups of legitimate wayfarers to dodge inspectors. They live by begging, pilfering, and food traffic on a minor scale.

Thus at a station thirty miles from Kazan, a boy about twelve accompanied by a starveling little brother half blind with trachoma came whining for bread outside the American Relief Administration car. One of the American Relief Association men asked his story—he didn't know whence he came or whither he was going, his parents having died last year—and suggested to the station official that he give the children milk and bread from the American Relief Association dining car. At the sight of the official, however, the boys ducked under the train and disappeared.

Next day both turned up in Kazan, where the elder of the two admitted that they had been twice cared for in the Government orphanage where they got food, but each time ran

away, not on account of ill-treatment, but just because they liked traveling.

And everyone says this is not an isolated case, but typical of thousands throughout the mass of Russia not yet totally solidified after her gigantic eruption.

RIGA, *October 6, 1921.*—The Russian famine, which has brought upward of 15,000,000 human beings to the verge of starvation today, with the prospect of wholesale deaths this winter, is perhaps the most important single factor in the internal and external life of Russia at present.

First, it has provided an object lesson to that section of the Communist party which is still loath to admit the urgency of the New Economic Policy whose prime object is to prevent the slow process of starvation in the urban centers through failure of the peasants to provide sufficient food under the communist system.

The famine was caused by drought, not communism, but, just the same, it drove home beyond doubt the grim reality that the whole machinery of state, from the civil and military officials to the workers on railroads or in the electric-light plants, was liable to be wrecked on the rocks of the food shortage.

Second, the famine has thrown Russia open, for the first time since the revolution, to a body of independent non-socialist foreigners. Still more, these foreigners are in a sense competing with the Russian authorities in the race to save lives on the Volga. Their coming has put the Soviet government on its mettle.

The latter was faced first by the knowledge that if it failed to get the American food delivered intact to the ultimate consumers it would be giving a tragic confession of impotence to the world. In consequence, it has devoted all its energies to the accomplishment of that delivery.

Nor is that all. The government is being spurred by the American example to put through its own program of famine relief. Six weeks ago the Soviet leaders talked most unhope-fully of the prospects of distributing seed grain. In this respect they have done wonders, although the total amount sown is less than one-fifth of the normal crop.

How fully the authorities appreciate the effects of American entry into Russia is shown by the words of Kalinin, president of the Central Executive Committee and one of the half-dozen men who rule Russia today, to Professor Vernon Kellogg after the latter's return to Moscow from his inspection trip through the famine area.

"We are already greatly impressed by your American methods and we realize what your work here means," he said. "During the last three years the rest of the world has tried to conquer us in vain. Perhaps it will be you Americans who come here on an errand of mercy who will really win that victory. Where you show us and the Russian people that your methods are better than ours we cannot help trying to adopt them. To that extent Russia will be in a sense Americanized."

SAMARA, *September 6, 1921*.—Sackcloth and ashes is the prevailing impression of Samara, capital of a dying province of the same name. In a great open space are huddled wagons, huts, tents, horses, goats, and even camels of the refugees from the country. All seem to be clad in the same dun-colored bundle of clothing so suggestive of sackcloth, and over all there is the same grimy pall of ashlike dust from the burnt fields through which they trudged from their foodless villages to the city where nothing can be done for them.

One family typifies all—the tall, gaunt father, with a blond beard and his face blackened with dust, listlessly fixing up a tent to the pole of which the frame of a horse is tethered mo-



tionless. Within is the mother on a shapeless bundle of rags, and in her arms a wailing baby. She scarcely attempts to soothe the child and it is only her hollow eyes that tell she is living. Outside, a small boy in a ragged shirt is picking over a heap of melon peelings to find something edible. By him a child of three or four lies half naked beside the dead body of a kitten, upon which its eyes are fixed sorrowfully but tearlessly. Round these eyes so blue and sad fat black flies are crawling. The child does not even raise a hand to brush them away.

Multiply this scene a hundredfold and you have the city of Samara; ten thousandfold and it pictures the whole province.

Already 588,000 persons are registered as utterly without food. By October there will be a million and a quarter, and by November the total peasant population of two millions and a half will have exhausted all supplies.

There is no more panic, and relatively little cholera, no sensational events, no revolt. The Russian people, ever patient, are dying quietly, but they are dying.

Today I visited a village barely twenty miles from Samara and therefore still near enough for the exhausted cattle to carry what little their owners possess into town to sell in exchange for bread. Clouds of black dust rose as the automobile bumped along a dirt track across rolling country like a prairie in Dakota. There was no grass in the parched fields.

We passed groups of refugees with all their goods piled up in wagons, and other similiar groups, different only by the absence of women and children, of villagers who preferred to take their belongings to the city for sale. Every mile or so there was the clean-picked skeleton of a horse.

The village, a straggling agglomeration of some 200 houses, was formerly inhabited by from 1500 to 1800 souls; but now half the houses are shuttered and empty, and more than 40 percent of the people are dead or gone. The auto halted at a grassy space between two rows of houses, each with a curious stockade

shutting in a little yard. The inhabitants drifted up slowly—mostly women and children. They were not excited or loudly pleading, but it is awful to hear a mother say in front of her own children old enough to understand:

"I had six. Two died of cholera—and I wish these had died also, for it is quicker than starvation."

Then another told quite calmly how one woman killed her baby rather than witness its sufferings. For these people have lost hope—completely. "We have heard the tale of relief coming too often," they said. "We know it will come too late for us. Already we have nothing but grass to eat. When that is gone we shall die. It will be only a few days more."

There was no complaint, no cries for help, just piteous repetition: "Help will come too late. We all must die."

The horrible part of it was that one knew they were right.

I was taken to a house where lived a family of eight persons. The grandmother was just baking "bread" for the next three days—their only food. Imagine eight greenish cakes about the size of a man's hand and half an inch thick. The old woman explained their composition—grass, chopped melon rind, and leaves.

"We had acorn bread before," she said, "but acorn meal costs 1000 rubles a pound and we have no more money. In two weeks the grass will be gone and then we shall die."

I saw a dozen such cases typical of all save the more prosperous villagers. To the former nothing remained; houses and barns had been stripped bare. The latter still had live stock and goods to sell for bread. "We can live for a month or so," they said, "though a horse that fetches 4,000,000 to 5,000,000 in Moscow sells in Samara for 500,000. But what shall we do in the winter? We have no seed or food reserves. In the winter we all must die."

The attitude of most inhabitants that remain is despairing fatalism. Some few fight on. I met a caravan of six wagons that

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had just started on a long journey to the Ukraine. The horses had flesh on their bones, and the children enough life to shout as the auto drove away. Also they were not disfigured by the hideous swollen stomach that marks the eaters of grass or acorn bread.

"They swell—so," said a mother as she pulled up the shirt of a boy of four. "Then they break into sores—so," showing a horrible ulcer under the arm of a younger child. "Then very soon they die."

There was no callousness and rarely any emotion in her tones, and the emaciated children stood like dumb, bewildered animals, just waiting for death.

Reports from neighboring provinces, added to what I have seen with my own eyes, make it possible to summarize the famine situation as follows:

Of 15 provinces affected, whose population aggregates more than 20,000,000, the worst are Samara, Saratov, Simbirsk, Kazan, the Tatar Republic, Chuvash, and the German Volga colonies. The population of the latter, upward of 10,000,000, will be faced with absolute starvation six to ten weeks hence unless relief comes.

Actually for the moment their position is better than a month or six weeks ago except as regards children under ten, who are unable to digest the bread substitutes, and already are dying like flies. Older children and adults are notably better in appearance and can stand a month or so more with the help of substitutes—potatoes, melons, etc.—and such scraps of the harvest as they have been able to get.

With diminution of the stream of refugees the cholera has fallen to nearly normal, but an epidemic of typhus is feared when the cold weather sets in. Cholera and dysentery will break out again if a new exodus occurs, as might happen toward the end of September if relief is inadequate. This also would intensify typhus danger.

As regards present relief little is being done. The Soviet authorities are concentrating their efforts to provide seed grain, of which 500 carloads, or about 70,000 tons, have already reached Samara and been distributed. Similar quantities are reported as reaching other centers. This is less than 10 percent of what is needed for minimum sowing, and it is improbable that above 10 percent more will arrive in time.

Anyway, owing to lack of transport, the seed grain is only distributed to such peasants as are able to make the journey to a center to fetch it, which means that there will be no crop whatever in the more distant parts of the provinces next year.

Some efforts are being made to feed refugees and children at railroad depots. Thus here in Samara they get one meal daily, sufficient to support life. The Anglo-American Society of Friends, which is co-operating, manages to feed about 10,000 children in Samara. The abandoned children in the central collecting stations receive a small, insufficient ration, and the more fortunate waifs in the orphanages will have enough to maintain life until the end of the month.

Everywhere I have visited, the local authorities seem most anxious to do the utmost possible for relief, and the American Relief Administration seems assured of their whole-hearted co-operation. But there is sore need of American system and "pep" to galvanize the whole work. Thus, in Samara city, the waifs receiving rations have been without fuel for three weeks, although the town is full of able-bodied refugees who would be glad to do a day's work collecting wood for a ration of bread. There is, too, much dirt, due to lack of soap, and extremely short commons for all persons engaged in relief work.

This latter is a serious problem, which is beginning to affect the railroad workers, crews of steamers, and other distributing agencies. Unless their rations are improved their work will be hampered to a serious and ever-increasing degree.

But that they are well meaning and eager to help to a man—

and woman—none can question. Another favorable factor is the amazing docility and uncomplainingness of the peasants themselves. Thus, those who obtained seed grain are obediently sowing it for next year instead of following their natural inclination to set it aside for themselves and families.

Everyone connected with relief work has insisted most strongly on the following points which my own observation confirms:

It is imperative that the American Relief Administration's relief work be carried into the country—which means that motor traffic is necessary for the more distant villages—not handled only in big centers. In the present state of universal anxiety the opening of a relief station in Samara city, for instance, unless accompanied by simultaneous distribution of food in the country districts, would cause an immense rush cityward from all sides.

"There would be a million people in a fortnight," said one of the local doctors, "and that would mean a cholera epidemic now and typhus later, let alone unthinkable confusion and hardship."

Secondly, it will be necessary to feed adults as well as children after the middle of October.

SAMARA, *September 5, 1921*.—Two hundred and more abandoned children are being picked up daily by the local authorities in the streets of Samara, children whose starving parents search elsewhere for food or frankly desert them lest they must watch them die.

And the days of the great inrush into the city are past—or not fully come.

In June terrified peasants were pouring into Samara by tens of thousands daily, and will pour in again, unless help comes, with the first bite of winter. But now the stream has dwindled

to a mere trickle of perhaps 1000 souls daily, for the majority will stay where they are to die slowly in the villages until the cold adds a new spur to hunger.

Of those who come their misery is so great they will not share it with their children. So they leave them near the doors of the houses Samara maintains for the reception of such waifs and pass on. If the city can succor them, good; if not—well, death is more merciful than the life they are living.

Imagine yourself standing at the corner of a dusty street through whose humps and hollows runs a car line with cars every ten minutes. The houses are mostly low, wooden structures with dirty windowpanes or gaping holes like bleared and sightless eyes. Here there is a tall stone building with shops below, shuttered or with worthless truck in the windows. Opposite there is a handsome dwelling, formerly the home of a rich merchant. A broad garden is dotted with dun-colored bundles, motionless. You guess they are children, because other similar bundles topped with fair-haired little heads are clinging to the base of the railing or clustered around the open gate.

Down the sidewalk comes a boy about fifteen in peasant costume, high boots, baggy breeches and long sheepskin coat with the wool turned inwards. He has thin brown cheeks. His puckered, wistful, blue eyes are roving over the street. Himself an orphan, he has been taken into the service of collecting other waifs, younger and more miserable.

Suddenly the boy stops and bends over what you supposed to be a heap of rags lying in a hollow near the sidewalk. There is a movement and a little thin whimper, like a newborn puppy's. Something rises from the dust. It is a boy about twelve, wearing a long braided coat whose collar still bears the badges of the smart academy of which it was once the uniform. His long aristocratic fingers are as thin as a fowl's claws and the refined face that bears the stamp of generations of inbreeding seems hardly thicker than the blade of a hatchet.

Murmuring something weakly he staggers to his feet as the elder boy stoops and lifts another bundle gently, for it is, too, a child, a boy of eight or ten, yet not a child, but a wizened changeling or a nightmare. Imagine arms no wider than rulers and so emaciated that hanging limply by the boy's sides they look as thin as a ruler's edge. The fingers are positively no fatter than a good-sized match, for I compared them. The little triangular face is shrunk to the size of a woman's hand and the blue eyes are utterly disinterested. The body may weigh fourteen pounds—just skin tense over the wasted little skeleton.

The peasant carries him easily on one arm and supports the elder boy with the other hand across the road into the garden of the collecting station.

There a cup of thin gruel is given to them, and such a washing as may be with cold water, for food is no more precious than fuel, and they are set down in the garden sun with thirty-odd other starvelings collected here today to await transfer to an orphanage—if perchance there be room.

At this collecting station there are now 500 children, of whom 75 are suffering from hunger cholera, hunger typhus, and hunger tuberculosis. Those that are well mostly lie or sit in the garden unmoving, unsmiling, unspeaking.

Those that are sick—huddled in rags on wooden cots they lie moaning in rows in a long fetid room without warmth, without sheets or blankets, without medicine of any kind, with nothing, "for we have nothing," says a doctor sadly. "And so they die. The only hope is to find places for them in the hospital or the orphanage."

Moscow, *December 9, 1921*.—What is the life of the young Americans of the American Relief Administration fighting hunger on the Volga? How do they set up and control the mech-

anism for feeding hundreds and thousands of starving children? What are their contacts with the population? Here is the story as told to me tonight by a "field worker," Charles Weill, who has just returned to Moscow after organizing relief for 30,000 children in the district of Novuzensk, the southeastern corner of Saratov province, on the edge of the Astrakhan and Uralsk Republics.

Mr. Weill arrived at the station at Novuzensk with a food train from Saratov at 6 a.m., November 7. His only companion was an interpreter named Andy, who had spent eight years as a baker at Akron, Ohio. Though the station is six versts from the town, the president of the local Soviet arrived before eight o'clock to welcome the American. He explained that the only auto in the district was out scouting after bandits, but horse and camel transport was available.

Weill and Andy rode to town in the president's two-horse hack through mud knee-deep, as the frost had not yet begun. Arrived in the town, they were greeted by the rest of the local authorities, each wearing a large red rosette in honor of the day, which was the fourth anniversary of the revolution. Though it was a holiday, no time was lost in selecting a warehouse and organizing a camel train to transport the food to the town.

By ten o'clock a line of camels and carts forming a train two versts long—two or three hundred camels and several score horses—was on the way to the station. By noon the work of unloading was begun. Weill was now reinforced by the director of public instruction, Negorsky, who spoke French, and the chief of the workman's committee, who understood German. He soon met the first problem. Novuzensk is divided into seven wards, each of which sent a group of camels and horses. The drivers of each group seemed to imagine the food they transported would be the share of their ward and began squabbling for the lion's share. Before the affair became a free fight Weill managed to convey the information that everything was to be



transported direct to the warehouse, but found it necessary to keep a strict watch on the loading, nevertheless.

Finally he perched himself on the top of a fifteen-foot pole in the center of the station yard, with Andy supervising in front, Negorsky on the right, and the workman's chief on the left. Shouting instructions to all three in English, French, and German, he got the first half of the loading done with much uproar but no friction.

About three o'clock the procession started, Weill and his assistants moving along in hacks to see that everything was all right. The camels' big flat feet made fine going in the mud until the outfit reached a deep gully about a mile from town. Here a veritable disaster occurred. Camel after camel toiled laboriously up the steep slope, but before reaching the top the strength of the underfed beasts gave out and with appalling groans they came sliding down again, all four feet outspread like skis.

It was excruciatingly funny to see the camels thus tobogganing, but at the bottom of the gully they met in a kicking, grunting, fighting mass, mingled pell-mell with carts, upset loads, tangled harness, and cursing drivers.

A dozen camels and three or four horses died there from sheer exhaustion and had to be dragged alongside the track, but ultimately the consignment reached the warehouse without loss and was safely unloaded under guard by six o'clock.

Weill and Andy expected to return with the train after a short meal and a long sleep, but almost before they knew it they found themselves bound for the local theater where they were ushered to a seat on the stage amid beaming dignitaries with red rosettes.

The curtain went up to loud strains of the "Internationale" and with great applause from a crowded house.

Weill replied suitably through the interpreter, and the applause which greeted both speeches became deafening when the president announced that in honor of the distinguished guest

from across the sea there would be a public holiday for a week and a fancy dress ball in the theater every night for the benefit of the famine fund.

The seats were cleared out of the auditorium there and then, and within half an hour everyone was dancing, many already being dressed in picturesque Tatar, Polish, Ukrainian, and Russian peasant costumes.

When the weary American left the scene an hour or two later, the people were enjoying themselves with Russian enthusiasm as if such a calamity as the famine had never entered their experience.

Moscow, *February 17, 1922*.—A "Pilgrimage of Death" would be a fitting title to the story of famine and despair brought back by one of the American Relief Administration's district superintendents, F. B. Lyon, from Orenburg, capital of the Kirghiz Republic. Conditions there are so bad that the president recently informed Mr. Lyon that he had tried to arrange for 30,000 young men to be sent to Tashkent to be kept alive in order that the Kirghiz race might not utterly die out, but that, although Tashkent and the Central Government had approved, the project had to be abandoned owing to the difficulty of transportation.

More lately the American adult-feeding program which was soon extended to 440,000 inhabitants and the extension of child relief to 125,000 brought a ray of hope to Kirghiz misery. Yet the effects of the famine on this Mongolian race have produced a degree of hopeless acceptance of fate's cruelty hardly to be paralleled even in this Russia, where passive suffering is such a universal rule.

Kirghiz fatalism is typified by a pilgrimage of death. The cemetery of Orenburg, about a mile outside the city, is approached by a wide boulevard. When the starving inhabitants

realized that their last strength was failing they developed a custom of staggering forth to the cemetery to die. Thus they hope to be assured of a burial in consecrated ground, for otherwise, as they well know, it is doubtful whether friends and relatives will be able to make the effort necessary to transport their bodies to the cemetery.

Each day bodies are found along the boulevard of those unable to make the journey. Some lie there three or four days until collected by a municipal cart, which piles them all together in a great open pit in the middle of the cemetery, where hundreds of bodies lie in an uncovered horror—for at night there come wretches hardly more alive than the corpses they rob to despoil the poor stiffened forms of their ragged clothing.

Those of the dying whose strength lasts out crawl to the cemetery and fall expiring over the cross that marks the resting place of the luckier dead. Sometimes, says Mr. Lyon, five, six, and even a dozen are thus to be seen whose skeleton features had brightened with happiness at the realization that their earthly pilgrimage had ended upon the symbol of divine mercy.

It is well for them that they are beyond further suffering, for Mr. Lyon, upon whose cheerful American youth the experience of the last three months has stamped an indelible impression, tells of ghastlier horrors yet. A few days before he left Orenburg he visited the cemetery with an American physician newly arrived from Moscow to tend a colleague suffering from typhus.

"See there," said the doctor, pointing out a grave where a big dog was lying motionless, its head on its paws. "You ought to get that fellow photographed. I often read about dogs coming to the grave of a dead master, but here it is actually happening—how touching!"

Lyon nodded, shuddering, for he knew things his companion never guessed. But later they came to a great pit where hundreds of bodies lay in horrid confusion. And there before their

eyes were other dogs and black sluggish crows tearing and eating. Only when gorged would the animals slink off to a near-by grave to sleep until hungry again.

Moscow, *June 12, 1922*.—"We have conquered the Volga famine. Speaking generally, I can say that no one will die of hunger any more in the whole Volga area," said Colonel Haskell, head of the American Relief Administration in Russia, today.

It was his characteristically modest and unpretentious way of describing the greatest philanthropic achievement in history. Eight million people today are being saved from starvation by American food transported thousands of miles by sea and land and successfully distributed in the face of difficulties that often seemed insuperable and would have daunted a less steadfast figure than Colonel Haskell.

No matter how black things looked—and it is now possible to say that three or four months ago they looked black enough—he never lost confidence, even when those around him felt sure that the task was beyond human capacity. His faith in American energy, ingenuity, and perseverance, and, in due fairness it must be added, in the honesty of the Soviet government and its ability to give adequate co-operation in the transporting of American food, has been justified by the magnificent results achieved.

"The Soviets did their share," he declared, "and I for one am willing to go on record as an optimist on Russia.

"To give an idea of how thoroughly we are meeting the Volga situation: American food is now being distributed in every village in the government of Samara, which was one of the worst affected. Nor is that all; we have gone far beyond the Volga area which, it will be remembered, was all we originally contracted to feed. Estimates vary as to the figures of

population in the Volga valley famine area; one can safely put it between fifteen and eighteen millions. In addition to American aid, the Soviets claim to be feeding three millions, and other foreign organizations upward of one million.

"But it is true that, although the American Relief Administration originally contracted to help the Volga region, the famine limits were subsequently extended far beyond the river valley. Today we are distributing American food to Votskaya in the north, in the east beyond the Siberian border, to Kal-muck tribes, in the south to Stavropol in the Caucasus, to the Don Cossacks, to many affected areas in the Ukraine and to Transcaucasia and the Crimea. So that, although the back of the Volga famine is thoroughly broken, there is still plenty of work to do."

When asked how long the American relief would continue, Colonel Haskell said it naturally depended on the harvest, which could not be estimated yet, but which there was reason to hope would be fairly good.

"At any rate," he said, "it is probable that the work would continue till the end of the year. There is an immense amount of medical work ahead, which the vast stores now imported enable us to carry out, and which is most urgently needed throughout Russia. My position is simply this: on the one hand it is my duty to see that not one cent entrusted to the American Relief Administration of Russia is spent unnecessarily; on the other, it is my job to do the utmost to save Russians from death by starvation."

Moscow, *July 9, 1923*.—If ever there was an epic of relief work it is the story of Colonel Bell of Ufa, the man who saved from starvation hundreds of thousands of half-savage Bashkir Tatars, away out on the desolate steppes between European Russia and Siberia.

November 4, 1921, Colonel Bell of Syracuse, New York, knowing nothing of child feeding and less of Bashkir Tatars, towed the third of his three automobiles with a team of horses into Mengelinsk, then the capital of the Bashkir Republic, fifty miles from anywhere, and sent an exhausted interpreter to get other teams to salvage the two machines hopelessly stuck in mudholes along the route. Then he called a meeting of the gaunt Tatar officials, hopeless, foodless, and moneyless, and told them that American food was on the way and that he was there to see that they got it. Now Colonel Bell is back in Moscow, with his job done—the same American Relief Administration district supervisor to run the district from the start of the operations to the finish. And how he ran it! Imagine what it meant to deliver daily rations for almost half a million people throughout the winter months of 1922, when the Siberian blizzards broke all records. Trails vanished in the driving snow, but the tough Tatar ponies plodded on, and the drivers, huddled in sheepskins, got somehow to every distributing station in an area of 10,000 square versts. Colonel Bell had put his own spirit into them, and they would not quit.

Nor would he. Typhus hit him and malaria and inflammatory rheumatism. One of his American assistants died and another broke down under the terrific strain, but Colonel Bell carried on, and a stream of American food flowed into the Tatar villages and Ural factory towns—towns to which its stoppage would have meant death.

Other relief organizations failed in that region, so Colonel Bell added their jobs to his and made good on all.

“We had 30,000 Russian and Tatar employees,” he said, “at the peak of our work, and I tell you they put their backs into it. And the local authorities did their darnedest, too. There are some fine people in Ufa, and they stayed on the job when they might have got away.

“One of my four best helpers was Mme. Thurger, the wife

of one of the most prominent members of the Communist party. That little woman had only to say the word and her husband would have sent a private car to fetch her away from hunger and typhus, right back to the Moscow Kremlin. But she stuck till the last.

"People say the Russians are quitters; not in our section. Why, our people could have left us early last month when the famine was beaten, and got their bonuses and pay-offs and everything. But they kept right on till all was finished a week ago, and every bit of food for the next six weeks had been distributed and the accounts had been checked up. Working late nights, too, some of them—just as good as in the first winter, when they used to stay at the office till midnight because it was the only place in Ufa where there was warmth and light and maybe a hot drink, a bit of bread, and soup. No, the Russians are all right if you treat them decently and give them a sense of responsibility, and don't let yourself say 'all right' to arguments, but decide, one way or the other, quick and stick to it."

The Bashkir Republic has as high a regard for Colonel Bell as he has for it. He is an honorary member of half the local bodies in the country, from the district council of Klatusov to the firemen's brigade of Belarth. The former town stands, like ancient Rome, on seven hills, and every spring the rains made communication between the hills impossible for anything but fish and a helicopter.

For seventy years the district council has been discussing the digging of a drainage canal to carry off the flood waters. Colonel Bell said simply: "We are feeding hundreds of able-bodied men. They would be glad to work." They were used in the summer of last year to dig a ditch 800 meters long, two deep, and one and a half wide, rock lined and roofed with timber, with the result that this spring for the first time inhabitants of Klatusov were able to walk dry-shod from hill to hill.

Belarth is a factory town where in the early years of the war

16,000 men were employed making shells for the Tsar's army. Now the factory produces ornamental swords, etc., and Damascus metalwork—steel inlaid with gold. Colonel Bell kept it going with food and in order to give employment in the spring of 1922 built a railroad from the factory to the coal and iron mines of Laposar, 20 miles away.

In other towns he built roads where before there were mud trails, impassable in spring and autumn. Two hundred and fifty-seven small bridges were built over streams and ditches, and he threw two long pontoons across the river at Ufa, now the capital of the Bashkir Republic.

The Bashkirs could not make Bell out: Why did he do it? So they offered him concessions—the mountains of Solomon's mines of gold, platinum deposits that once produced hundreds of tons yearly. Colonel Bell refused, and gradually they came to understand this strange American who liked his job for its own sake.

But they made it up when he left them. Gifts of all sorts were presented to him. Earlier there was a bear cub, which grew fat and tame and learned to jump into Mr. Bell's car and loll beside the driver as if he owned it. On New Year's Eve the bear cub and Colonel Bell's male cook went out to celebrate, and both drank too much bootleg vodka and started home late at night, hailed a cab and got into a fight and were arrested. Colonel Bell had to get up early on New Year's morning and bail them both out of jail.

If the United States ever recognized Russia, said the Bashkirs, and an autonomous Bashkir Republic was ever allowed to have a foreign representative, then Colonel Bell would be it—in Washington. There in their section of the Ural Mountains, they said, they had the world's richest deposits of almost every kind of mineral and precious or semiprecious stones, and some pretty good factories which only needed American technique and initiative to be put on a real paying basis.



Nor was that all. Ufa, for some reason, is the headquarters of all Russia's many millions of Moslem citizens. In Ufa there is treasured one of the first seven sacred copies of the Koran handwritten by Mohammed's successor, with a page inscribed by three successors of the Prophet. Never before had infidel eyes looked upon this holy relic; but at Colonel Bell's request the Mohammedans brought it out into the open air for young Traynham, the official A.R.A. photographer, to photograph it, while their holy men were turning its sacred pages. And when the Mohammedan congress was held at Ufa to choose a new Mufti, Mohammedan executive for all Russia, Colonel Bell was invited to watch the proceedings, being the only foreigner and only non-Mohammedan so honored in Russian or Tatar history from the days of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane until today.

## GLIMPSES OF MOSCOW DURING THE EARLY DAYS OF NEP

Moscow, *September 12, 1921*.—Life has adjusted itself wonderfully to the changed conditions in Russia. When one begins to get down under the surface one sees how the human faculty of accommodation to circumstances triumphs over difficulties. The conditions in Moscow are fairly typical of other cities, but harder in respect of what has become for everyone there the great preoccupation of existence—food, shelter, and warmth.

Overcrowding forces rigid observance of the rule of only one room per person. The fuel shortage puts heat at a premium and transport weakness has rendered the food problem acute. In the country and small towns—the famine area naturally excepted—all three are much easier.

Of the different classes of the population, the workers naturally found things the most satisfactory. For lodgment they had been used to an overcrowded den an American dog would have refused, and their food was the simplest and coarsest. Since the revolution they have had rations, now supplemented by pay, which are generally superior to their former fare, while two or three rooms, comparatively clean and airy, per family, mean unwonted comfort. In fuel allowance they get the preference and as far as is possible their houses are centrally heated.

For some time after the revolution the state gave a regular outfit of furniture, blankets, kitchenware, etc., to couples on their marriage. Later it reduced this to twenty or thirty yards of cloth or two pairs of blankets. Similarly, a layette was given to a woman expecting to become a mother. Both these allowances were made to government servants, soldiers, etc., as well as to workers, but now they are things of the past.

The reason for this abolition is simple. Ingenious couples used to get married by the hundreds to receive the state bounty. A week or two later they would come along shaking their heads. "Too bad we can't agree," they would say. "We shall have to get a divorce." But they did not give back the outfit, which they promptly sold. For, despite all the efforts of the authorities, private trading had never been abolished. It was driven underground, but continued just the same, despite severe penalties, which is one reason why there has been such a striking response to the recent restitution of commercial liberty.

In the same way a woman expecting a baby used to borrow identity cards from a dozen or so of her friends and make a tour of the various offices where layettes were distributed. To this the authorities responded by giving only after a baby's arrival, on a certificate of the precinct doctor good for said precinct alone, on which condition the bounty is still maintained.

The former aristocracy and official and professional classes naturally felt the change most, but by now they have in a large degree adjusted themselves and taken positions under the government which enable them to carry on.

Most pitiable is the lot of those aristocrats, male or female, who are devoid of any qualifications of practical value. One sees them stand patiently for hours in the open-air markets holding coats, furs, small pieces of silver, or last scraps of jewelry by sale of which they can eke out existence for a few weeks longer. The New Economic Policy has given a chance to the younger ones to open restaurants, hat stores, etc., but the position of the older ones is hopeless. However pathetic may be the sight of fortune's favorites "fallen from their high estate," there is no escape from the law of the Russian hive: "The drones must die."

The commercial class has suffered less. Rich business people mostly retained enough from the wreck to secure a measure of comfort. The rest hustled, and many not only kept going

but made good money. It was illicit and risky but the profits were all the greater and they used the money to make life easier by hook or crook.

To get a typical cross section of Moscow life, take a young married couple of the middle class not mixing in politics. The husband is working, say, in a government office and the wife teaching in a government school. If they are lucky they have been able to procure two rooms, one for sleeping and one for living, cooking, etc. Their combined wages are insufficient, but plus their rations of food and fuel they are able to keep body and soul together. The wife does the cooking before going to school, using a homemade system of fireless cooker with the aid of cushions which keep the food hot for a single big meal—no one takes more than one in Moscow—around three or four o'clock, with bread and tea or cocoa in the morning and at night.

The husband spends his off days in trips to the country, where he buys flour, butter, eggs, etc., to sell at a profit in Moscow and buys fuel and clothes with the proceeds. (The big, wasteful, Russian tiled stoves have given place to the little, economical iron stove or oil heater.)

Habit and the natural philosophy of the Russians enable them to bear minor hardships, such as the almost total impossibility of getting a bath or the absence of sanitary plumbing. Being young, they share the stimulus of intellectual life—the new schools of the drama, art, music, dancing, and literature—which undoubtedly resulted from the revolution. The new freedom, too, from convention has its attractive side. Almost insensibly, it appears, they are drawn into the current of the new regime and find their present life for all its discomforts more interesting than the old.

Moscow, *October 14, 1921.*—The queerest thing I have yet met in this land where everything is so different and topsy-

turvy is cats on leashes like dogs in the streets. There on Spiridonovka—in Moscow they rarely add the word meaning street or avenue—where the art headquarters is situated, was a portly tomcat marching sedately beside his mistress, who held a string attached to a velvet collar around his neck.

The sight brought the realization that it was almost the first cat I had seen outdoors in Moscow, and the explanation of a Russian friend showed me why.

"There are so many rats nowadays, and cats are relatively so scarce, that they are too valuable to be allowed outside alone, so their owners give a good ratter an airing on a leash."

It is true enough about the rats, for there is a rat family in my room in the hotel which have grown quite tame, and I remembered having wondered why week-old kittens commanded the same price in the market as four pounds of bread, or an antique bead bag that might fetch \$100 in New York.

There are queer contrasts, too, in prices. Thus it costs half a million rubles to get rubbishy modern embroidery done on a woman's shirtwaist, whereas one can buy a superb linen tablecloth, 6 feet by 12, a masterpiece of old openwork embroidery, for little more. Both are handwork, but present labor rates are paid for the former, while the latter has no utility or real value here.

Safety razor blades, too, are greatly prized, and cost many thousands of rubles. The reason given is that before the revolution few Russians ever shaved at all—or, anyway, never shaved themselves. Nowadays no self-respecting soldier or public servant under thirty wears a beard. Ordinary razors wrought shocking havoc in unaccustomed hands, so there followed a demand for safeties, which ought to make the fortune—in Soviet rubles—of any foreigner able to land the concession.

Another queer thing is that in none of the ruins of smashed buildings does one ever see a whole brick. The reason is simple—the ruins have been carefully picked over. People wanted

bricks to construct small home-made stoves, the great Russian tiled stoves consuming a quantity of wood beyond possibility of supply today.

It is also curious to buy butter in the market from a peasant woman wearing a platinum and diamond watch bracelet around her plump, brown wrist and an old Marquise emerald ring on her fat first finger.

That countesses work as servants and ex-servant girls ride in government automobiles as heads of important offices is what one might expect after any great revolution, but there is one story of reversed fortune with an ending so poignant it is worth special mention.

The millionaire head of the biggest tea importers in Russia—where tea is the national drink—and the owner of the finest real estate property in Moscow and of a famous racing stable, got caught in the revolution. Stripped absolutely of everything, he managed to get a job as a street cleaner before one of his own buildings whereby to keep body and soul together for himself and wife. After a few months he became seriously ill and was taken to a hospital. His wife, then sick in bed, was unable to do anything.

After a short illness the former millionaire died and his wife tottered to the hospital to beg that he be buried with religious rites. Somehow she reached the chief physician, to whom she told the whole story.

"For God's sake, madam," he cried, "why did not your husband tell us who he was? He might have been saved by an operation, but"—he shrugged his shoulders—"chloroform and so forth are so scarce it is literally impossible to do things like that for everyone. But your husband—why, he built and endowed the hospital where I studied. I would have done anything for him and I am sure an operation would have saved his life."

## Duranty Reports Russia

Moscow, *December 24, 1921*.—The All-Russian Soviet Congress now meeting in the State Opera House typifies results to the masses—soldiers, workmen, and peasants—after four years of power. The delegates occupy the parterre and the three lowest tiers of boxes in the magnificent building, formerly reserved for the members of the nobility and imperial court and the wealthiest of bourgeois. What was formerly the Tsar's central box has been set aside for the members of the Communist International, and on the stage at a long table there are the members of the Central Executive Committee. Two boxes at the left of the stage are at the disposal of foreign diplomatic representatives and the members of the American Relief Administration—and fervent communists from Germany or America can and do turn toward them as they fling defiance at capitalistic tyranny and its tool, the bourgeois press.

The delegates are happy, excited, and passionately intent on everything that happens. Roughly dressed, they are mostly simple-faced and simple-minded; but here and there one sees a cunning or a cultured face. Their ages vary from twenty-five to thirty-five. Nearly all have come a long distance to enjoy this proof of the victory of the revolution, this direct participation in the affairs of mighty nations. So much, at any rate, they have gained, and to them and doubtless to the majority of those they represent it is a gain indeed, for liberty is a matter less of fact than of imagination and emotion. Many of them, too, are scheduled to speak, and even others hope that they will get a chance to intervene in the debates.

But from the first moment the congress opened there was not a shadow of doubt that the government machine had been oiled to millimeter precision. The proceedings go with a smoothness that means efficient work in caucus and perfect discipline. Lenin is not an absolute dictator, because he must get the agreement of the Communist party to his policy. Generally he does get it, but the limitation still remains. Once that agreement is secured,

the rest is merely a matter of arrangement. The congress just sets the seal of its approval upon the decisions.

That it enjoys doing so and feels that it is really being consulted hurts no one; but it is quite evident to a dispassionate observer that the government steam-roller is no less ponderous and efficient because it moves imperceptibly. The delegates have gained a sense of power, enhanced by the precautions taken that no one not authorized to do so shall obtain admission. The streets around and the square fronting the Opera are cut off by smart infantry with fixed bayonets. No less than seven military controls must be passed before one reaches his (or her) seat, with two controls of exits to prevent transfer of tickets. There are soldiers everywhere—in corridors, foyer, and lobbies—so that the delegate savors the cup of his privilege to the last drop.

He has that to set against low pay and long hours of not unwilling idleness if he is a factory worker; against scant rations and rigorous discipline if he is a soldier; against lack of the necessities of life, worthless paper money and requisitions if a peasant. And he is satisfied with the chance. What he has he means to keep, and what he wants he hopes to get.

For there is no denying that the congress gives the impression of force, solidarity, and efficiency that augurs well for the present and future Soviet government.

But what of those whom the delegates represent? Are they satisfied, too? The answer depends largely on the delegate himself and his success in conveying to them the optimism with which he himself has been inspired in Moscow. Anyway, the soldiers have a freer and more congenial atmosphere and the chance of unlimited advancement; the peasants have got their coveted land; the workers are in unlimited control of the factories, which has done them no good yet, but is now showing signs of developing into a workable compromise with private ownership which will insure fair treatment and living conditions. Being men, all, even in this hungry, icy Russia, have hope.



In addition I believe that they have confidence in their leaders.

But of real democracy or even a real voice in the government there is nothing. The Russian electoral system would make a Tammany boss weep with envy. Theoretically everyone can vote, but the workers elect a much higher percentage of the delegates than the soldiers, and the soldiers a much higher one than the peasants. The system, as described in a Petrograd paper, is as follows in practice, if not in theory:

Twenty-four hours' notice is given that there will be an election in a certain factory. Next night there is a meeting open to anyone, which is addressed by an "agitator"—that is, a spell-binder—of the Communist party. His eloquence arouses—or lulls—the meeting into acceptance of the list of candidates chosen by the party caucus beforehand. The meeting then votes on the list by a show of hands. Rarely has anyone the temerity to offer an alternative list, although this was attempted on one occasion in Petrograd. The press report runs:

"But what is this? There is actually a group conspiring in a corner; they seem to be students, and very young. It is gathered that they are dreaming of putting forward a list of their own; this absurd business is quickly ended, and the malcontents retire in confusion."

They are marked men for the future, as anyone will be who shows no alacrity in raising his hand at the right moment.

But such untoward incidents occur seldom. The electors are trained and there is nothing to prevent a well-drilled unit from "repeating" election after election. The Bolsheviki do not defend the system, but they say it is expedient and even necessary in Russia—after six months' experience, one is inclined to agree with them—and that they give more real freedom as the situation grows more settled and the people better educated. They add that in Western countries party control is a little less real, but more camouflaged. They say: "We have the nerve to do openly what you do under cover; that's the only difference."

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Moscow, *November 27, 1923*.—Since the French revolutionists fêted the Goddess of Reason in the Champs de Mars, Europe has seen no stranger spectacle than the first public "civil christening" performed last night in the Russian Free Opera House before the fifth anniversary congress of the Women's Department of the Communist party.

On a stage decked with red banners and slogans, a young father and mother brought a baby girl out to the footlights, before the table of the Executive Committee, and dedicated her to communism. The offering was accepted by the aged priestess of the Red International, Clara Zetkin, and by Bukharin, himself aflame with devotion to Russia's new religion.

With sublime incongruity, of which the spectators seemed unconscious, the proceedings closed with a ceremonial christening dance by Isadora Duncan and her pupils, to the sacred strains of Schubert's "Ave Maria"—an astounding epilogue to the thunderous roll of the "Internationale," sung before. Almost all the 4000 seats were filled, the auditorium being crowded by women, mothers, sisters, and brothers of the Communist regime, with a sprinkling here and there of boy members of the Communist Youth League.

The red headkerchiefs of the girl communists stood out like poppies in a wheat field, with among them the white hair of old peasant women or workers, bowed by toil. There were hundreds of young bobbed heads, "Sovietskaya barishna"—"Soviet misses," as the public call the girls employed in the government offices—and at intervals, shining under the arclights, the trim black leather jackets of the active girl-communists, with short, black leather skirts, high boots, and little toques, brightened with red rosettes. It was the regular uniform of the new Women's Legion of Russia.

Sitting with the committee at the table on the stage were Clara Zetkin, whose appearance of a dear old German grandmother hides the fiercest revolutionary spirit in Europe; Mme.

Kollontai, the first woman ambassador, on a vacation from her post in Norway; Lenin's sister, taller and thinner than her brother, with the prim air and high, cultivated voice of the typical "schoolmarm"; and the wife of Muralov, Trotsky's right-hand man, now Military Commander of Moscow.

After some short preliminary speeches, Bukharin announced that a young working couple, named Aneyniev, had received permission of the Communist Women's Department to hold the first public civil christening of their little daughter before the congress.

Behind this there is an interesting story. The communists have found that even in their own ranks there is a gap left by the abolition of church ceremonies.

"There are four great events in human life," wrote Trotsky not long ago, "birth, christening, marriage, and death; for each of them human nature demands some ceremony. We Bolsheviki readily recognize the last ceremonial honor to our dead. It is only logical that we admit the ceremonies for the other three events also.

"I suggest that when a child is born to communist parents they make a celebration in the group, factory, or village, where they work. The christening, also, and marriage should be celebrated. That we decline to believe in superstitions should not mean that we are blind to the importance of a ceremonial dedication of a child to human service—in our opinion a thousand-fold worthier than the service of any deities the world has known before us."

In profound silence, Bukharin summoned the Aneyniev family to bring the baby before the congress. Beside the writer in a box there was a young "Soviet miss" who giggled cheerfully with a boy companion through the earlier speeches. Now they leaned forward, with shining eyes, and her hand gripped the boy's hand on the chair back until his fingers whitened.

A little, doll-like creature nestled in the mother's arms on

the stage, white clad, save where red roses had been sewn by eager neighbors to form a fringe of color around the tiny face. Holding the child, the young mother stepped forward and timidly began to tell how she had decided to ask the congress to christen the baby.

"My mother was horrified," she said. "She is of the old Russia; she cannot understand. Some neighbors thought it impertinent, wanting to seem important. This hurt my husband, and we almost gave up the idea entirely. Then I read the life of Rosa Luxemburg, that brave woman who died for the workers, and I knew I was right."

Her voice gained strength as she told how certainty had come to her that she must give her "own girl child to the same life of sacrifice as Rosa Luxemburg," and how before that certainty the opposition voices were hushed.

Then she placed the child in the arms of Clara Zetkin, who rose and spoke of Rosa Luxemburg, "my martyred comrade, whose name this child will bear henceforth, that her memory may remain fresh and live among us."

Her voice faltered—from age, emotion, or sorrow—and an answering thrill passed through the audience. The girl beside me was openly crying, and her young lover rubbed his sleeve hurriedly across his eyes.

Meanwhile, in a tiny dressing room behind the stage, Isadora Duncan, who had charged good money to dance before the most exclusive audiences of the Western world, sat raging at the delay, her eyes, her hair, her robe one fierce red storm of flame.

Then Bukharin, whose pale face and blond beard shone white against his black costume, took the child from Clara Zetkin's arms. He held the baby tenderly, yet awkwardly, and the mother instinctively stepped toward him. Her stalwart young husband, who had played second fiddle with characteristic Russian stolidity, put out his arm to restrain her. The incident broke the tension, and a ripple of laughter shook the theater.

"The baby is organized as a good communist right from the start," murmured my little neighbor. "A less disciplined child would have howled its head off by now."

"I dedicate thee, Rosa, little flower of human life, to the cause of Russian women," said Bukharin. "Rosa, sweetest of flowers; Luxemburg, honored name of a martyr—beauty and sacrifice."

He held the child high in the air as the "Internationale" rolled out its appeal for the world revolution.

Anywhere but Russia the scene would have been banal, even ridiculous, but here it was not. Atmosphere, innate dramatic sense—call it what you will—it was simple, natural, and terribly impressive.

Then came Isadora and her children. Schubert's throbbing notes followed the drumbeats of the "Internationale," and Isadora moved to the center of the stage to bend in an attitude of wonder over an image like that of the Christ child. As she knelt there, in seeming adoration, there came a sweep of dancing children behind her, across the darkened scene. With graceful eagerness they peered at the world's miracle which Isadora's art seemed to have conjured there before us.

Every woman in the audience watched with them as though it were a living child that lay under Isadora's outstretched arms. Then the music swelled and the dancers raised their hands to heaven as if in prayer. Among them flitted blond eight-year-old Mary Peters, baby daughter of Karl Peters, one of the most terrible of the Cheka zealots, her wisp of red tunic like blood in the spotlight.

Moscow, *March 20, 1923*.—"Oh, yes, the revolution was terrible—it interrupted the work of the ballet school three whole weeks." In these astounding words the rising star of the Russian ballet, the twenty-year-old Abramova, gave her impression of

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one of the greatest national convulsions history ever recorded.

"There was shooting all over Moscow," she continued, "so we had to stay home, and even the big theater was shut more than a fortnight. Yes, it was really terrible."

One feels bound to say that Abramova is the slimmest, sweetest, most graceful creature that ever devoted her life to art, if dancing be really art. At the age of eight she entered the ballet school, and it swallowed her, body and soul. There you have the real secret of the success of the Russian Art Theater, of Balieff's *Chauve-Souris* company, and of the Russian dancers. In America, England, and France actors are actors on the stage, but human beings—part of the time, anyway—in private life. But Russian artists are 100 percent artists always.

Take Geltzer, the present star of the first magnitude in the Moscow ballet. Geltzer has been dancing for upward of forty years and is as good now as she ever was. Every day she spends a couple of hours at her exercises. Can you see them, this whole ballet corps—men, women, and children seven or eight years old—holding with one hand to a wooden rail and, thus supported, accomplishing intricate physical evolution at the word of command? What do they care about revolutions or wars?

"Yes," they say, "our work was interrupted," or "the post-revolution audiences don't give us the same inspiration as in the old days; we don't feel that they understand and appreciate our technique. But their applause is more generous, if less discriminating."

That is all. Can you find any deeper absorption?

Moscow, *August 18, 1923*.—It is expected that new light will be thrown on the history and development of European art by the restoration of and research among ancient icons now being carried on in the Winter Garden of the Kremlin palace.

The experts engaged in the work say they have discovered

the sources of the inspiration of the Italian primitives who laid the foundation of Western art in perfect specimens of Byzantine art dating as far back as the eleventh century, such as hitherto has not been known to exist anywhere.

When the work began, soon after the revolution, the experts were confronted with a heterogeneous mass of icons varying in size from a few inches square to six feet by four, the figures being uniformly covered, except the hands and faces, by sheets of gold or silver shaped and worked to imitate robes. These covers were comparatively recent innovations; and when they were removed it was found that the painting beneath was little less darkened by age than the hands and face.

The experts, however, were able to make a rough classification, and then, about two years ago, began the more delicate work of restoration. For this were chosen leading physicists and chemists, who gradually developed a process which brought back the original tints without injuring the surface. These experts impress most strongly upon the visitor that throughout the work no speck of new color or pigment has been used; it is restoration in the full sense of the word.

Roughly speaking, the process is this: they spread oil over the surface, then scrape it very gently with a knife. Then they wipe the surface, apply more oil, and scrape again. Sometimes four or five coats of oil are applied.

It was in the course of this work that a wonderful thing happened. The experts found that, instead of one picture, the same panel (all Russian icons are painted on wood) often held two, three, or even four, concealed beneath centuries of dirt and smoke from countless candles burned before it.

Thus, beneath sixteenth, fourteenth, and thirteenth century pictures, each entirely different and superimposed like palimpsest manuscript, there finally came to light pure Byzantine work of the eleventh century, 400 years before the Eastern capital fell into the hands of the Turks. It was unfortunately

necessary to destroy the upper layers to reveal the original in as bright, fresh colors as on the day it was painted, but the experts believe that the sacrifice was worth while.

There is a head, for instance, of an unknown saint—Byzantine work, certainly not later than the eleventh century—whose draftsmanship, technique, and color scheme are wholly modern. The expression of the features bears little resemblance to that found in the work of the Italian primitives and may almost be said to represent a unique survival of the lost pictorial art of Greece. The type of face, however, is unmistakably Russian, which suggests that the Byzantine worked, perhaps on order, from a Russian model.

In other pictures it is seen that the original bright-colored robes have been painted over in brown or dun color, but have kept the same form. Thus there is a full-length figure of Christ, at first reckoned to be of the fourteenth century and finally referred to the early part of the twelfth, with a vivid white, gold-trimmed robe instead of the untrimmed brown smock.

None of the pictures is signed by the artist's name, but the majority have the name of a saint in gold letters in a corner.

When the restorations are complete the icons will be replaced in the Kremlin churches, which are no longer used for religious purposes and henceforth will be among the world's most interesting art museums.

Moscow, *August 18, 1923*.—Gorgeous ecclesiastical and state vestments—robes in cloth of gold and silver, adorned with pearls, rubies, and emeralds—now are being prepared for exhibition in the great Kremlin palace of the Russian Tsars. These were the ceremonial habiliments of Russian patriarchs and potentates for four or five hundred years. Some are so stiff with solid gold and silver embroidery that they can stand upright by themselves.



Fifty to sixty pounds in weight of precious metal adorn one of the amazing robes. Five years were required to make the needlework of some of these robes stitch upon stitch, adorned as they are with portraits of saints and princes in the finest silk embroidery—scores of them per robe—each portrait representing months of work by devoted fingers.

What they are worth cannot be calculated—they are probably priceless, being inimitable. The value in gold, silver, and jewels alone runs into tens of thousands of dollars.

There are two robes of a patriarch, made at the beginning of the fifteenth century, before Byzantium (Constantinople) fell to the Turks. One, a dark-blue fabric of silk with solid gold and silver threads, was woven in Byzantium itself. This, experts assert, is the oldest vestment in Europe. It is pure Greek in form and workmanship.

The other, made by hand in Russia, doubtless from a Byzantine pattern, is strung with thousands of pearls and decorated with portraits of the royal family—Vasily, Prince of Moscow, with his wife and children, and the portrait of Johannes Palæologus, the last but one of the Emperors of Byzantium. Above are inworked portraits of hundreds of saints, each as bright and living as 500 years ago.

Some of the robes bear the curious round, high hat of the patriarch of rather later date, Russian work in gold and silver fabric, richly decorated with ermine borders.

The texture and design of the robes are unlike anything known to the modern world. Worn once or perhaps twice yearly at the highest functions of the Russian Orthodox church, these vestments have lain for centuries in the crypts of the Kremlin churches until they were brought forth and classified for the Bolshevik museums. The oldest of all is woven of cloth of gold and silver and silk, in the form of a stole, from the earliest Christian church of Asia, at Nicæa, where once a Church Council formulated the Nicene Creed.

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There are altar cloths, too, one made by the sister of Boris Godunov for the famous Chudov monastery in the Kremlin. There are also caftans, robes of princes of the church in Oriental style rather than Greek. One such was presented by the brother of Peter the Great to the last Russian Patriarch Adrian, before Peter abolished that holy office. In the form of a Greek chiton, it was originally made for Peter's brother himself, and presented later by him to Adrian as a mark of special, imperial favor. The fabric is silk, gold, and silver, enriched with thousands of pearls, uncut rubies, and emeralds. It may be the costliest garment extant in the world today. It weighs nearly seventy-five pounds. Worked on the collar, in pearly letters, are the story of the gift and the names of the donor and recipient.

Hardly less wonderful is a robe offered to the Patriarch Nikon a century before by the wife of the then Tsar, Alexei Mikhailovich, as a token of gratitude because he took her away from the smallpox epidemic then ravaging Moscow to the Solovetski Monastery see. There are blobs of gold all over it, each a quarter of an ounce or more in weight. Rubies and also emeralds and pearls adorn it, while the sleeves are decorated with tiny golden bells which still tinkle faintly their mellow, plaintive note.

Moscow, *November 13, 1925*.—Under the iron rule of the proletarian dictatorship freedom still exists in Russia. Even here in Moscow, despite Red guards and secret police, freedom runs rampant, wild as wolves and savages—a freedom anarchis-tical—free to rob, free to fight, free to kill, free (as needs often must) to starve.

It is the freedom of Moscow's homeless children, thousands of them, parentless, homeless, uncontrolled, living and dying haphazard like the flocks of the black and gray scavenger crows

whose croaking wakes Moscow every morning to remind the inhabitants that it is a city not of Europe but of Asia.

Some day when the canons of political practicability have given way to a demand for stark truth there will be written the epic of Moscow's homeless children—highwaymen, murderers, and dope fiends almost before their bones have hardened. Now one can only give scant glimpses of their curious lives and obscure deaths. They flow into Moscow faster than the authorities can collect them, these orphans of war, famine, and pestilence, dirty, daring, and depraved.

For the past three years one of their chief strongholds has been the "Catacombs," as Moscow calls an acre-wide range of cellars under an enormous unfinished pre-war building right in the center of the city. The jungle life of these catacombs demanded such a toll of blood, so many corpses were thrown naked upon the outer snow, that the authorities have put a high wooden fence around the entire area and plan next year to raze this whole city block.

To illustrate the methods of the homeless children, imagine you are standing on a corner of a slushy Moscow street with an untimely sleigh cab and meager horse on one side and a chilly wheel cab and a more meager horse on the other. In the middle roll crowded streetcars and before you there is a little wooden shanty with fruit, sandwiches, and cigarettes on its flimsy counter.

Suddenly there materializes beside you a group of children, seven, ten, and twelve years old. They have gnomelike, filthy faces, childish eyes, shaggy hair, men's long coats, trousers pinned up or cut and ragged. They shuffle together, taking counsel, then swift as swallows make one after another a leap for the counter, grabbing anything, running like the wind.

I followed their flight two or three hundred yards along the street. In a courtyard they were dividing their booty. One had bread, one a herring, one a packet of cigarettes, one chocolate,

one nothing. But all was put in the center and divided equally. Then they began eating hungrily.

I asked them where they lived. They eyed me like small animals waiting to spring, but not daring. I repeated the question, smiling more confidently than I felt. A small blue-eyed girl wearing a fragment of an army overcoat over a jute sack cut short above the thin bare legs, said amiably:

"We know where we live, but if you tell the gendarmes about us we will find you and cut your heart out."

So I withdrew, discomfited.

Visualize another picture.

In the middle of a wide boulevard there is a big round caldron to boil tar for road repairs. About nine o'clock in the morning workmen arrive—sluggish and gossipy, in the Russian manner—to begin the day's work by relighting the fire beneath the caldron. Aroused by their voices, half a dozen children creep out from under the caldron—ragged, black with soot, still blinking from sleepiness, but warm and as hungry as sparrows—Moscow's homeless children.

Yet another picture.

Citizen Deprey, an engineer working for a state factory, informs the city police that his twelve-year-old son Nikolai is missing. He left home in the morning to go to school and disappeared. Citizen Deprey draws a good salary and his son was well fed and warmly clad in felt boots, thick cloth breeches, fur coat and cap. The police investigate—vainly.

Four days later Nikolai crawls home, half frozen, in his underclothes; a sheltered scion of the Russian revolution, he met half a dozen of freedom's homeless children in a lonely by-way. They threw a sack over his head and half pushed, half carried him to an empty fowl house on a vacant lot. They stripped him, pushed him inside, and bolted the door.

He waited in the cold and darkness for hours and hours. Then they came back and huddled in the fowl house for the

night. They did not hurt poor Nikolai; they gave him bread even, and raw herring and water. Two more nights this happened, but the fourth day only one came with food. He left the door unbarred and Nikolai escaped to rejoin his frantic parents.

The police have arrested two of these juvenile bandits, Visgunov and Testometov, whose joint ages barely total twenty-one. They will be sent to a reform school but their followers will carry on the torch of freedom.

Not long ago the Communist Youth League sent out volunteer workers to study the problem of juvenile delinquency— theft, immorality, and dope. They reported it almost impossible to draw any information from the culprits. One thing only they admitted—almost without exceptions they were orphans.

The World War, civil war, the great famine, typhus and other epidemics were reckoned by American relief organizations to have produced upward of 2,000,000 orphans, mostly without any means of support and mostly under the age of thirteen. The Soviet authorities are doing everything possible within their means to meet the situation. They do not attempt to hide the facts. The Soviet press paints black pictures of the "drag net" system in operation to collect the homeless children from the streets and the vicinity of the main railroad station, where they especially congregate. But for each one taken, others flock in from the country and the number is constantly swelled by fugitives from the children's homes and reform schools. No cage, however warm and kindly, can hold these waifs of freedom. No administrative measures, no money even, can bring a rapid solution of their problem, which is no worse today than at any time in the past four years, but is thrown into sharper relief by the improvement of life in the country as a whole.

## THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT AND THE CHURCH

Moscow, *February 11, 1922*.—The Soviet government has decided to take religious treasure for the benefit of the famine sufferers.

*Izvestia* (official newspaper of the government) announces today that the Central Executive Committee resolved at its session on February 9 to empower the Minister of Justice to seize the wealth of all religious bodies and sects for famine relief with the briefest possible delay.

The announcement followed an appeal by Archbishop Yevdokim of Novgorod to all true believers to "lend to the Lord" their possessions to help those dying of starvation. "Even church wealth should also be sacrificed," said the archbishop, "for in this hour of terrible need he who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord."

The archbishop quoted texts of the New Testament and the example of the patriarchs of the Russian church in medieval days, who gave the riches in their charge to defend the country against Tatar or Polish invaders.

Such are the bare facts of a story of strange interest and mysterious intrigue that carries one back from Russia of the twentieth century to Europe of the Middle Ages.

What are the motives that impelled the Soviet government to decide upon the seizure of the wealth not only of the Orthodox church but of the Moslem mosques—there are twenty or thirty million Mohammedans under Soviet jurisdiction—and Jewish synagogues? What prompted Archbishop Yevdokim to advocate the sacrifice of treasures to which the church clung all the more determinedly because the Soviet government was its avowed

and atheist foe? And last, but not least, what is the real worth of Russian ecclesiastical riches today—its real worth in dollars and cents not in historical interest or artistic value?

But throughout the four years of Bolshevik rule the church has been relatively little interfered with by the cyclone of change that smashed down the empire and the aristocracy and uprooted the foundations of commerce, industry, and finance. Perhaps the Bolsheviks were afraid of it. Perhaps they thought it could not hurt them. Perhaps, even, they hoped it, too, would change and become a strong, helpful force in the task of Russia's regeneration.

For whatever reason, they left it alone, until now it is the only organized element in Russia alien—or hostile—to Soviet rule. It accepted Soviet authority because it had to, but did not welcome it or support it.

And now with the New Economic Policy—which at the outset even threatened a split in the iron-disciplined ranks of the Communist party itself—the Bolshevik leaders realize that their greatest struggle is beginning.

Will they be able to maintain in Russia those things for which they made the revolution, or will the country gradually slide back into the old capitalist system, in which they assert the weak and needy were exploited by the rich and strong? They have said they expect this internal struggle to be harder than any civil or foreign war through which they held firm. What more natural than that they should welcome the opportunity to force the hand of the sole organized body they know still stands against them? For the famine gives this opportunity.

In the last month there have been murmurs among the people, communists and non-communists alike, asking why the church didn't devote its fabulous riches to aid the millions dying miserably along the Volga. Weeks ago the little churches in the provinces voted all their meager wealth for famine relief, and the Moscow press calculated how many tons of life-giving food

the riches of the Moscow, Petrograd, and Kiev churches might provide.

Now when the Volga need has reached the peak of desperation comes the appeal of Archbishop Yevdokim, suggesting the very measure of general church sacrifice so many people are demanding. To that appeal the decision of the Soviet government is a direct corollary. But what induced Yevdokim to make it, knowing as he must have done, that it virtually authorized the government's move against the church in which he is the leading figure?

Is he one of those almost fanatical enthusiasts of whom Russia has known so many who would obey to the letter the Master's precept, "Sell all thou hast and give it to the poor," who holds wealth a curse and comfort a snare of Satan? Or is he an ambitious prelate who aims at ousting his less far-sighted superiors, suddenly realizing that it is wiser to play the game of the all-powerful government and "make friends with the Mammon of unrighteousness"? Only the future can tell. But if the voice of church circles in Moscow were not hushed by caution, Archbishop Yevdokim might hear some comments on his action that, even were he Peter the Hermit or Mazarin, would make him pause and wonder.

Finally, what do all these churches' riches amount to? Accounts vary, but careful investigation has convinced me of one thing—their real worth is enormously exaggerated.

Suppose one takes the simplest view that the Soviet government decided to seize the church riches, just because it needs money. If that is the case it will be grievously disappointed. The fabulous riches of the church have always been a Russian legend, but those who know say that if the net result of church expropriation produces \$5,000,000 for the famine sufferers they will be exceedingly surprised.

One or two million at the outside they claim would be a far more reasonable figure. To begin with, most of the property of



the Russian church—which really was immense before the revolution—was in houses, land, or paper (mortgages, stocks, and bonds). All that is gone. Secondly, in the first wild days of the revolution a great deal was looted—not by the Bolsheviki, who suppressed looting with an unhesitating hand, but by the scum of the army and the gutter rats of the cities—and what was not looted was hidden where, it may be taken for granted, no one can discover it today.

Thirdly, Russian church treasure is largely unmarketable, at any rate in conditions of forced sale. Thus in the Petrograd Church of the Saviour and Holy Blood there is a temple carved from a priceless piece of malachite laboriously polished with diamond dust. And there are pictures and icons centuries old and utterly unique. But what is their cash value under the hammer of a knock-down sale?

But about the gold and jewels. Well, Napoleon heard a huge cross above the Church of Saint Basil was worth 10,000,000 francs, but when his engineers climbed a scaffolding to test it they found the proportion of gold not worth the trouble of melting down. The great dome of the Moscow Church of the Saint Saviour, built to commemorate Napoleon's defeat, was said to require half a ton of pure gold to cover its vast shining surface. What will be the net profit after they have stripped it?

Some years before the war the authorities of the ancient Church of the Ascension asked the chief Moscow jeweler Ferberger to value their treasure in jewels, which they—and the public—estimated at several million dollars. Experts declared it might fetch \$50,000 in the open market.

There was an antique crown in the Kremlin studded with diamonds as big as hazelnuts and a saddle that was an offering of the Shah of Persia to Catherine the Great, gleaming with emeralds and rubies as big as silver dollars. But, in both, the stones were nailed in place with silver nails plumb through the middle, which knocked their sale value to next to nothing.

That is the case with many of the oldest church treasures, and where the stones are really valuable there is always risk of substitution.

Moscow, *August 12, 1922*.—The situation in the Russian church has become a three-cornered struggle. On one side is the Bolshevik government, in principle and by doctrine an avowed opponent of religion, yet forced by its position as the ruling power in Russia to recognize the church's importance as one of the great factors in Russian national life. On the other side are the churchmen divided into two hostile camps, the Reformers against the Conservatives.

The quarrel between the latter far antedates the Bolshevik revolution. Bishops Antonin, Johann, and Yevdokim and their followers are now opposed to Patriarch Tikhon, the two metropolitans Benjamin and Agafangel, and the rest of the hierarchy of the "black" clergy. "Black" is the generic term for the ritualist or high church clergy who take the same vows of celibacy and world renunciation as Roman Catholic priests. They have lived in monasteries instead of among the people, and their opponents claim they formed a part of the ruling despotism rather than the living church.

Accordingly, the reformers have chosen the title the "Living Church" for their movement. Their program explains their whole position. They demand, first, that the church return to the simple life of the early Christians; that it become genuinely popular, and that its priests be truly of the people, living the life of the people and not of a caste apart. Second, they demand that monasteries and unnatural ascetic life be abolished, that the rule of the "black" clergy be swept away, that the higher offices in the church be thrown open to all without the barrier of celibacy. Third, that control of the church be no longer in the hands of the patriarch and metropolitans, but of a sort of con-

stituent assembly chosen by election from the rank and file of the clergy meeting once a year. Fourth, simplification of the church service and the use of Russian instead of the old Slavonic, and the election of a permanent executive council. Antonin's reformist views got him into trouble as early as the 1905 revolution, subsequent to which he was excommunicated by his superiors. After the Bolshevik revolution he, with a group of followers, tried to rally the church from dismay, confusion, and sterile efforts at counter-revolution into the path of reform that would bring it into close touch with the universal change around it. They met with little success until the question of requisitioning church treasures became acute in December of last year.

The government hesitated nearly three months before signing the requisition decree. What perhaps finally decided them was the sudden and startling adhesion of Archbishop Yevdokim of Nizhni Novgorod to the side of reform. In a bold manifesto Yevdokim quoted from Holy Writ and from Russian history texts and precedents to support giving of the church treasure to feed the famine-stricken on the Volga. The decree was passed and almost immediately Patriarch Tikhon issued a circular instructing his subordinates to endeavor to avoid the requisition.

He did not advocate resistance, though the authorities charge that some of his subordinates did—it is on this charge that the priests of Moscow were executed and others in Petrograd condemned to death.

But during the trial former Patriarch Tikhon admitted enough to lead the authorities to arrest him. He delegated his authority to the metropolitans Benjamin of Petrograd and Agafangel of Yaroslavl. The former already was under arrest and has since been condemned to death but not executed. The virtual arrest of the latter followed almost immediately. That left the church without leaders and gave the "Living Church" reformers their opportunity.

Leaders of the reform movement to whom I have talked claim they have received from Tikhon—after his learning of the arrest of the two metropolitans—a sort of form of resignation which carried with it recognition of their right to hold the Church Congress now sitting in Moscow, which henceforth is to be the supreme religious authority. Tikhon's partisans deny this with the additional rebuttal that, even if it were true, Tikhon acted under pressure.

So matters stand today, with the "Living Church Congress" meeting in Soviet Community House No. 3 and busily passing resolutions approving the revolution and the Soviet government, abolishing monasteries and the black clergy, and generally carrying out its program.

The question remains: Will the main body of the church follow them? Their spokesman claimed there are upwards of 150 representatives in the congress from 38 of the 50 ecclesiastical provinces into which the present Russia is divided. They added frankly that "the great majority of the church is just watching with its nose in the air to see which way the wind blows."

Impartial critics familiar with church affairs decline to forecast the outcome. They point out that reform sentiment is genuinely widespread both among the mass of the clergy and the religious laity, and that reconstruction of the church and readjustment to changed conditions are matters of urgent necessity. They say it is difficult to see how this can be carried out by Tikhon and his associates, partly on account of their own uncompromising attitude and partly owing to the government opposition that attitude produced. On the other hand, though it may be reckoned that fully seven-tenths of the clergy and religious laity favor reform, it is doubtful whether more than a tenth is willing to support the "Living Church," which the majority regards as having sold itself for a mess of Bolshevik potage. The "Living Church" people may reply they could not

succeed without government support, that their end justifies the means, and that anyway the Soviet government is the government of Russia and why not admit it? But all that cuts the ground from under them in the minds of a majority of believers.

From the government viewpoint the situation is satisfactory enough. There is a split in the church, and their pressure on the hierarchic and monarchistic elements found supporters in the church itself. Finally, they have to some extent got control of the reform movement, which might conceivably be much more dangerous than the somewhat spineless hierarchy which it is trying to supplant.

Moscow, *April 9, 1923*.—The trial of the Patriarch Tikhon may not begin until April 17, instead of Wednesday of this week. As the Congress of the Russian Communist party is set for the 15th, such a delay would permit the ruling class embodied in the communist delegates from all parts of Russia to talk the affair over before the trial opened.

It is by no means sure that the case against the patriarch is extremely strong. The principal charges are:

First, that he communicated with the Tsar during the latter's exile at Ekaterinburg; second, that he communicated with the anti-Bolshevik parties outside of Russia, notably in sending delegates to the All-Russian Church Congress at Karlovitz in 1921, which passed strong anti-Bolshevik resolutions; third, that he issued anti-Bolshevik proclamations from time to time during 1918, 1919, and 1920; and, finally, that he opposed the requisition of church treasures in the spring of 1922.

Regarding the first charge, it is true that he authorized the Archbishop of Tobolsk to administer the last sacrament to the Tsar; that is all.

Regarding the second, he did, with the approval of the Soviet

authorities, send a delegate to Karlovitz, but with no instructions to vote for the anti-Soviet resolutions. Indeed, he publicly disavowed them on learning that he had done so.

On the other hand, some of his proclamations, especially in the early years of the revolution, were more or less directly critical of the Bolshevik regime, though never advocating opposition or resistance to it.

The same statement applies to his stand on the matter of the church treasures last year.

Although Patriarch Tikhon, whose position in the Russian church corresponds to that of the Pope in the Roman Catholic church, will soon be tried for his life, there appears to have been no open intercession for or even reference to him in any of the Easter services that lasted from 11:30 Saturday night to 3 or 4 yesterday morning.

To understand the apparent indifference of the majority of believers to the fate of church leaders it must be realized that even before the revolution Russia presented the unusual phenomenon of 95 percent of the congregations throughout the country being utterly unconcerned with the private or public life of their pastor, however scandalous it might be, but at the same time utterly merciless in the case of the slightest error in ritual which he might commit in the performance of his priestly functions in the church. If this occurred, the priest was forced to go or the church was boycotted.

This helps to explain why churchgoers now decline to raise a voice or finger on behalf of churchmen, although the flame of their own religious ardor burns undimmed.

If anyone doubts this latter statement, let him go, as I went Sunday, to a country church—not in the provinces, far from the possible anti-religious influence of Moscow—but within twenty miles of the city. In a village of a thousand inhabitants there were already gathered four or five hundred at the church. Along the lanes leading to the church were perhaps a hundred or more

hurrying to 6 o'clock service, each with a little bundle tied up in a white napkin in his hand. It was an Easter cake to be blessed.

Inside the church just before services began you might have thought you were in the waiting room of a small railroad station except for the colored lights and elaborate gilded shrines and holy pictures. Also no one was smoking and the men and boys were bare-headed. But there was a loud buzz of conversation, quite unrestrained, and the scuffling movement of several hundred men, women, and children. To complete the illusion, there was a long file of people with money in their hands awaiting their turn to buy tiny candles.

Near the door sat a businesslike old woman. As each one bought his candle from her, he moved on to the right, where there was a long box, covered with gold embroidered cloth, with a full-length picture of the Christ on top. This represents the body of the Saviour lying in the tomb. All made the sign of the cross in the Russian fashion over this, and then, bending, kissed the feet, hands, and head of the picture. They did it simply and reverently, and then passed across the floor—there are no seats or pews in a Russian church—to pick up the cake left on the other side of the door.

Talking cheerfully, they carried the cakes to the foot of one of the little shrines, crossed themselves, undid the napkin, and, sticking a candle in the top of the cake, lighted it. Then they resumed their conversation. By 6:15 all the cakes were in position, crowned with candles.

There came a sudden hush as the priest entered to unseen music, followed by boys bearing holy water, incense, and gilded banners. From the center of the chancel he pronounced a short blessing on the congregation, now kneeling; then passing to the shrines he added his blessings to the cakes and sprinkled them with holy water. Before dipping his finger in the silver basin he made the sign of the cross each time.

Meanwhile the congregation remained on its knees on the bare stone floor in total silence. When the priest had completed the tour of the church and again stood in the chancel he pronounced a longer speech of dismissal.

Then he retired to the altar amid a burst of unseen music, similar to that heralding his entry.

The service over, everyone picked up his cake on which the candle was still burning, and hurried homeward, shielding the flame with his hand.

It was explained to me that this ceremony usually took place at the midnight service, but was now performed separately, as there was only one priest for the whole village.

I heard no reference to Tikhon or any word of hostility to the government or to the Communist party. Everything was simple, naïve, and somehow childishly nice, like the happy ending of a fairy tale.

Moscow, *May 3, 1923*.—The All-Russian Church Council unfrocked Patriarch Tikhon today.

By a resolution voted after long and fiery speeches by the leaders, Vedensky and Krasnitsky, it expelled him from the church, abolished the office of patriarch, and branded him as a traitor to Russia. The resolution reads:

"Inasmuch as the Soviet government is the only one in the whole world fighting capitalism, which is one of the seven deadly sins, therefore its struggle is a sacred struggle.

"The council condemns the counter-revolutionary acts of Tikhon and his adherents, lifts the ban of excommunication he laid on the Soviet government, and brands him as a traitor to the church and to Russia.

"It hereby formally abolishes the office of patriarch forever and establishes an annual church council as the supreme directive body in church affairs.



"It expels from the church ex-Patriarch Tikhon, who is henceforth a simple citizen, Andrey Belavin."

Thus Tikhon was judged by his peers without a hearing or a defender. The resolution was voted with enthusiasm after Krasnitsky had crowned the edifice of hate of Tikhon that Vedensky had built up.

Moscow, *May 5, 1923*.—Of all the amazing contrasts Russia has witnessed in the past six years there have been few stronger than the religious ceremony today when the reform leader, Vedensky, was consecrated archbishop in a frowsy, makeshift theater of the "Third Communist Hostel."

To the contradictions of Communism and Christianity, of church and theater, there was joined the further anomaly of one of the most solemn ecclesiastical rites of the world's most ceremonial church being held on the bare wooden planks of an improvised theater, with a mess of stage paraphernalia cluttering up the background. Yet, with Russia's infallible faculty of achieving true artistic harmony, nothing could have been more appropriate. Vedensky reeks of the theater—he's exactly what a finished performer of the Russian Art Theater would conceive as a portrayal of Savonarola. And about the whole Church Council there is an element of unreality—a falseness, almost—that even the highest theatrical art can rarely overcome.

Legally, if you like, this is the genuine governing body of the Russian Orthodox church, with the keys of life and death in its hands. It can set down from his seat Bishop Platon, head of the Russian church in America, can brand Patriarch Tikhon as an outcast and a traitor, can vote sweeping changes in a ritual that has endured for centuries and can, perhaps, "get away with it." But it cannot escape from the element of unreality. The whole atmosphere is impregnated with their own doubt in themselves.

"We have got our program," it is whispered. "We have cau-

cused everything beforehand—it will all go smoothly—we are the supreme church authority of Russia and the government is behind us—nothing can challenge us. But—but—are we sure of ourselves—what about our vows and our training? And how will the unknown quantity of the new Russia's equation—the peasant masses, with whom rests the final verdict of communism and church and all—how will they judge our work?

So today's ceremony, while tremendously thrilling and impressive, gripped an outsider only in the way a theater does, with a transitory emotion which failed to persist against an inner conviction that it was not quite real after all.

Three metropolitan bishops, Antonin of Moscow, Peter of Siberia, and Tikhon of Kiev (not the patriarch) marched onto the stage to the singing of a hymn by the congregation. Solemnly and with formal gestures they donned their gorgeous robes of gold and colored silks. Bishop Antonin put on an ancient cope of the Moscow Cathedral, imparting the traditional kiss and sign of the cross as he donned it. Then he faced the sacred pictures that took the place of an altar and chanted a brief prayer.

Turning again to the congregation, he received the bishop-elect, Vedensky, robed a little less gorgeously than the consecrators and crowned with an imposing golden miter. Led by the arch-priest, the latter mounted the stage and embraced the three metropolitans, bowing his head to their feet.

After another canticle, Vedensky stepped forward and spoke. His power as an actor was then apparent. It was obvious how he had dominated the conclave by his golden eloquence, but more particularly by playing politics with consummate skill. In his position as an independent delegate—and leader—of the old Apostolic Church group, he was able to hold the balance between the Russian and Siberian factions of the "Living Church." But he did more—he actually swung the majority of delegates of both parties to himself, and promotion to be archbishop today

meant not only a remarkable advance in spiritual rank but consecration as the real leader of the Orthodox church of Russia.

Despite this, he advanced to the front of the stage with an air of utter fatigue and profound humility. In a low, tremulous voice, he told the story of his life—early struggle with unbelief, faith's victory, and then a new struggle with his family, who wished him to be a musician. He won and was ordained. His first sermon brought down a rebuke from his bishop on account of its liberalism. He became rector of a great Petrograd church, but on the eve of the revolution he ruined himself by a statement that the Tsar had no right to use the church for political purposes.

His voice swelled and grew more thrilling as he told how he was stoned by a crowd in Petrograd and threatened with exile by the Tsar's ministers. Then the Tsar fell and Vedensky knew that reform of the church had become possible. To bring this about he devoted his life.

But it was only under the communist regime that reforms actually were being carried out. On that note he ended a peroration that had made the congregation gasp, so fervid and powerful it was.

Today *Pravda*, the organ of the Communist party, says cynically: "Christians may bless communism—good enough—but please remember that it doesn't mean that communism blesses Christianity."

Another ceremony will be held tomorrow in the Moscow Cathedral on a more grandiose scale.

Moscow, *January 7, 1923*.—A strange picture was presented in Red Square of Moscow, the heart of revolutionary Russia, this afternoon. The old Russian Christmas day had been selected by the Young Communist League for a demonstration—which

fell rather flat—against religion, culminating in the symbolic “burning of all gods.”

The Red Square is the center of all that is most historic. It took its name centuries ago from the execution of the first great Russian revolutionist, the Cossack bandit Stenka Razin, before the eyes of the Tsar, who sat in the gallery of the huge clock tower, still topped with the golden double eagle and the imperial crown. At the narrow entrance of the square there is the most famous icon in Russia, the holy picture of the Iberian Virgin, before which Tsars and generals used to give thanks for victories. When the Poles, whose defeat by the blacksmith Mirin is still commemorated by a statue in the square, were driven from the walls of the Kremlin in the sixteenth century, a million adoring patriots bowed before this icon. When Napoleon's Grande Armée slunk off from the ruined capital, the little shrine again witnessed a furore of popular devotion. Last of all, General Kornilov, on the eve of his fatal attack upon revolutionary Petrograd, in which he met his death, bowed before this venerated symbol in the hope that it would grant him success.

Today for the first time in history the doors of the shrine were closed. But as the motley procession passed under the narrow archway, there were a little group of believers standing beside it crossing themselves against the blasphemers. Perhaps they aspired to be martyrs. If so, the boon was denied them. So far as I could see, no one in the procession took the least notice of them.

Whatever faults may be laid at the doors of the Bolsheviki, it must at least be admitted that they know how to stage-manage popular demonstrations. And the setting was worthy of their skill. Imagine a great oblong of trodden snow. On the right is the stark medieval wall of the Kremlin Palace. On the left is an immense modern building, which is the headquarters of the State Co-Operative Department Store. By a curious irony, in

the center of its façade there is a gilded picture of the Christ. The walls of the Kremlin and of the modern building are marked here and there by the bullets of the Red revolution, but around the picture the bricks are unscarred. It is the same throughout Moscow; the revolutionists never fired at the holy icons.

Straight before you is the unique, amazing church, with its many-colored domes, minarets, and spires, which Ivan the Terrible built for his own glory and God's. Lest it be copied, he burned out the architect's eyes with hot irons. And so it remains, amazing, unique.

Into the square the procession filed, the marchers singing shrilly. They were mostly youngsters with banners and floats bearing stupid-looking images representing the gods and priests of all ages and nations. Among them one figure stood out supreme as a real work of art. It was the devil, with horns of wood stained red and black and clothed in red and black sackcloth. The huge goggled eyes rolled horribly; the white tusks grinned malice between the red lips; and the savage fingers were outstretched to drag sinners to destruction. It was calculated to frighten children into a nightmare, but in all its horrid ugliness there was something ridiculous. It was a vulgar bogey, not the Prince of Darkness; a terror for the ignorant but a laughing stock for the wise.

Vainly I asked the name of the man who made it—a factory worker said some; a Red Army man, said others; the leader of one of the Young Communist groups, said still others. Whoever he is, he is a genius. Except for Rodin's "Penseur" I have seen no statue which so typified the idea the sculptor had in mind. That it was burned for the amusement of a Moscow crowd is the worst crime committed today.

For the blasphemy, so called, was only superficial. Under the surface the demonstration was nothing but the old human revolt against an oppressive and too rigid church. For that,

Luther was excommunicated as an atheist and Antichrist; for that died Calvin and Savonarola; for that even the Founder of Christianity Himself was crucified by the ritualist Pharisees and priests.

Of course, Russian churchmen cannot understand it. While the crowd sang a Marxist parody of a religious canticle, an old woman near me crossed herself, and whispered audibly: "Father, forgive them. They know not what they do." A Red Army man beside her caught the words; his smile faded. He stopped singing and cast an apprehensive glance upward, where thousands of ravens, assembling for their evening flight to their roosting place in the woods south of Moscow, made the pink sky echo with their croaking cries.

"Religion is the opium of the people," screamed a red banner before us. But the soldier in his own heart was frightened.

And then, from a stone tribune lately erected under the Kremlin wall, where are the graves of the first President of the Soviet Republic, Sverdlov, and the American, John Reed, and other leading communists, a woman began to speak. Her face was young, passionate, and ugly with the flat, stupid ugliness of the Slav peasant. But her eyes and voice were aflame with spiritual fire. So she proclaimed irreligion to this crowd of boys and girls, aflame, like her, with music and excitement, with the new religion that is communism, and to the three or four hundred idlers—no more—gathered to watch the show.

She spoke well and strongly; but, though she did not know it, there was not one word against religion in her long, furious speech against idols, priests, and church. She kindled the soldier beside me till he forgot his fears, while the old woman crossed herself again in horror, and her husband quoted texts to protect him from evil. But all she said might have been paralleled in the Bible: that the temple made without hands was superior to the gorgeous fanes around us, built in blood for godless tyrants; that lascivious, self-seeking priests could not

point out the road to heaven, and that self-sacrifice and the assuaging of human ills were better than lip-service and churchly rites.

Her fervor gripped the crowd as she spoke, like St. Francis of Assisi, of man's duty to man and of universal brotherhood. She was moving, pathetic—ignorant, if you will—but not irreligious.

Then the procession moved away to the Red Garden near the Warsaw station, in the center of the most proletarian district of Moscow, where the effigies were burned. The whole affair passed off without a single disorderly incident, which I venture to say would have been the case in no other city in the world. They are well drilled, these Young Communists, and, though they may demonstrate, they do not throw stones at shrines and churches or insults at church worshipers.

The latter, too, know better than to try to make a disturbance. This is the first Christmas since the revolution on which they have been comparatively happy. The big stores last night showed this. Less violent, but no less real, there was a spirit of relief and satisfaction, like that into which Paris and London exploded when Armistice night ended the nightmare of the great war. The pre-war church here is supine and divided, the ritualists cowed by government pressure, the reformers torn by sectarian disputes. Against the live, young religion of communism it can make no opposition. But an old priest told me yesterday that the church waited, secure in the knowledge that no people could live without the belief in God, which in one form or another was anchored deep in every human heart.

"Communism or the old religion," he declared, "it is all the same—there is belief and faith in God behind both."

Moscow, *June 30, 1923*.—A new and bitter struggle for the internal control of the Russian Orthodox church is predicted by

those here who are best acquainted with ecclesiastical affairs, in consequence of the release of ex-Patriarch Tikhon, around whom the anti-reform elements in the church are now expected to rally.

The ex-patriarch's intimates declare that, far from being weakened or depressed by his captivity, he is in full health and considers himself free to take up the challenge of the "usurpers," as he regards the "Living Church" group now controlling the Orthodox church, without interference from the government, with whom he has made his peace. In some quarters it is even suggested the reason for his release was the anxiety of the civil authorities lest the reform movement, having matters all its own way, might actually bring about a religious revival which in the long run would prove embarrassing to communist plans. This is probably untrue, though it is consistent with the general principles of the Soviet government to prefer a church split by hostile factions to a strong, homogeneous body.

But there is little likelihood of a religious revival as a result of the activities of the reformers. On the contrary, it is beyond doubt that the mass of the churchgoing population of Russia, with the exception of the great cities, far from approving the reforms voted at the recent Church Congress, regards them with shocked dismay. The Russian peasant is an extremely religious creature, but his religion is far nearer superstition than the mind of a Western Christian can conceive. The Russian peasant is blood cousin to the Tibetan Buddhist, who "acquires merit" by setting a little water-course to turn a prayer-wheel many hundred times an hour. He believes implicitly in witches and devils, in spells and exorcisms.

The church service, conducted in the old, unknown Slavonic language, had for him an attraction—and even a holy terror—beside which one in a language he could understand would sink to the commonplace. The mystic ritual and elaborate vestments which the reformers are striving to simplify were part of the



church's great hold on the ignorant masses. The loose talk about "bringing the church up to date" entirely fails to take account of the fact that the Russian peasants, who form 90 percent of Russian churchgoers, are still spiritually in the dark ages of medieval Europe.

All this Tikhon knows, and his supporters, who know it also, are far more numerous than the proceedings of the recent Church Congress would lead one to suppose. In that congress the reformers held almost unquestioned sway by the simple expedient of refusing admittance to their opponents. Then, however, Tikhon was in jail, and his followers were scared to cover. Now things are changed, and the voice of the provinces will be raised against the "iconoclasm"—this old word that once precipitated bloody sectarian strife in Byzantium is again on the lips of modern Russian churchmen—of the reformers, who know only the cultured congregations of Moscow, Petrograd, and Odessa.

LONDON, *September 14, 1923*.—The key to Russia's complicated religious problem is the fact that communism itself is a religion of an extremely fanatic and militant character. Although it refuses to admit the existence of a supreme power or deity as such, communism is not atheism as the word is generally understood. In it human labor—man's endless struggle upward from the beast—takes the place of God, and the "millennium" on earth, when peace shall reign and plenty and happiness, and none oppress his neighbor or profit by his neighbor's weakness, is the ideal goal instead of a heaven after death.

Karl Marx is the Joseph Smith of this new "revelation," and Lenin is his Brigham Young. Already a mass of doctrine and doctrinal argument against heresy has grown up around the communist faith. It gained its power with one stroke throughout a great country, and its missionaries go forth to the whole

world. And having the power, it proceeded, as all new religions do when they are strong enough, to attack and endeavor to supplant the old faiths that existed before it.

Its struggle with the Orthodox church, for this reason logically inevitable, was precipitated by the peculiar relation of the Orthodox church to the Tsarist regime. The Orthodox church was not separate from the Tsarist state, but a part of it. It was immensely wealthy, not a little corrupt, and wholly devoted to the maintenance of existing conditions on the one hand and to persuading its followers to do likewise on the other.

At the outset of the revolution the Bolsheviki contented themselves with "dis-establishing" the Orthodox church and proclaiming the equality of all religions in Russia and universal religious freedom. "Henceforth," they said, "churches and priests of all faiths become a charge upon their congregations instead of being supported by state grants or accumulated wealth. A Jewish, Roman Catholic, or Protestant congregation has as much right to have its priests and place of worship anywhere in Russia as the Orthodox faith, whose privileges now cease."

The effect was immediate. With a few exceptions the whole strength of the Orthodox faith was thrown in the counter-revolutionary balance, and everywhere at home and abroad its sharpest weapons—notably Anti-Semitism, which was responsible for the revival of the forged "Protocols of Zion," and "pogroms" by "White" forces that claimed thousands of Jewish victims in the Ukraine from Kiev to Odessa—were directed against the "godless Bolshevik usurpers." The victory over the White generals undoubtedly was accompanied by vengeance upon the church that aided them, and in the minds of the victors the bitterness remained.

The famine of 1921 gave an opportunity for a further stroke against the Orthodox church in the shape of the requisition of the church treasure for the benefit of the sufferers. The Soviet

government hesitated many months before issuing this order, and it is doubtful whether it would have done so at all but for two factors.

The first was moral deadness of the Orthodox faith as compared with the more vital religions in Russia—Roman Catholic, Jewish, and Mohammedan. The second was the split in the Orthodox church itself—a reform movement whose leaders actually advocated giving up the church treasure for the famine victims before the government decided on the requisition.

To take the first point, the Orthodox faith had become a sort of superstitious ritual to a great mass of its followers, especially among the peasants, a ceremony they went through at stated periods without it greatly affecting their lives. Neither the Roman Catholics, Jews, nor Mohammedans, whose faith was something to live by and, if necessary, die for, had any accumulated treasure comparable to that of the Orthodox church. The requisition accordingly was carried out with an ease that surprised the Bolsheviki themselves. A few scuffles occurred here and there, but no organized resistance. The reform element seeing a chance to get control of the church—as it subsequently did—aided the requisition.

Thus encouraged, the authorities went further. They arrested the head of the church, the Patriarch Tikhon and Archbishop Benjamin, Metropolitan of Petrograd, on the charge of treason—provoking scuffles in Moscow and Petrograd that in the latter instance involved bloodshed.

After a brief trial in the early spring of last year, Archbishop Benjamin was condemned to death and executed. It did not cause a ripple in Russia or abroad, so busy by this time were the church leaders in struggling for control among themselves.

But this action had grave consequences—it gave a section of the Bolsheviki the impression that the life of even an eminent priest did not matter much, which contributed in no small degree to carrying out the sentence on Mgr. Buchkevich.

In the summer of 1922 the reform leaders held a congress in Moscow, which paved the way for a united front of the various sections definitely to seize control at the All-Russian Church Congress this summer. At Christmas occurred a fresh attack on religion in the shape of demonstrations throughout the country by the League of Communist Youth. It was rather a stupid and childish business, but had a significant reaction a month or two later in the Ukraine region, where there is a large Jewish population. In several localities Jewish believers went out to beat up the demonstrators and even, it was reported, killed some. In Mohammedan localities, it need hardly be said, no anti-religious demonstrations occurred. Around Moscow, also, the peasantry showed signs of restiveness with the result that anything of the kind at Easter was forbidden, although two or three vulgar atheistic magazines still limp along in Moscow and Petrograd.

In the late spring came the long postponed trial of the Roman Catholic priests including Mgr. Buchkevich on a charge similar to that against Archbishop Benjamin. Nearly all were of Polish origin and a "blanket" charge of treason was held by the prosecution to include alleged treasonable activities during the Polish War of 1920. In reality the basis of the trial was the old European question whether Roman Catholic priests were allowed to invoke the authority of Rome against the law of the land.

The trial opened quietly and proceeded along expected lines. Everyone knew the majority of the accused would be condemned, but few dreamed any severe sentence would be carried out. Undoubtedly the evidence of treason would have been insufficient to obtain a conviction in a Western court. Evidence favorable to the accused was ruled out also in a manner a Western court would not admit. But the Bolshevik criminal law has a clause putting the "revolutionary conscience" of the judges as a higher decisive factor than the evidence. Besides, acquittal

would have meant the admission of the injustice of the execution of Archbishop Benjamin.

When the sentences were pronounced according to anticipation, it was taken for granted by a majority of the Russian public and foreigners that they would not be carried out. Then came protests by Poland and England and the situation changed, despite the fact that the governing body of the Russian Orthodox church sent a communication to the Archbishop of Canterbury endorsing the sentences of both the Orthodox and Roman Catholic priests. Matters were much complicated by the All-Russian Communist Congress which met a few days later.

There was the usual conflict on planks and persons which precedes any such convention and it is my firm conviction that a group, at first a minority, pressing for the execution, won over the waverers by a promise to support certain policies in the congress. A sudden severe relapse in the illness of Lenin a few days before increased the ferment as did wild reports of mutiny in the Red Army. In reality there was no plot, but the arrest of a number of commissary officers for graft coincided with the energetic refusal of soldiers, one Moscow battalion, to eat the bad food they were given—in all probability the latter affair being due to the former.

The world knows what happened. Mgr. Buchkevich was executed March 31, 1923, and the death sentences of the other Roman Catholic priests were commuted to prison terms. The execution of Mgr. Buchkevich was a political error of the first magnitude, and roused a prodigious outcry against the Bolsheviks in religious circles, irrespective of denomination, throughout the Western world. It must not be forgotten, however, that in Soviet eyes his position was different from that of his co-accused, in that he had retained Russian citizenship whereas they had "opted" for Polish nationality. This fact made his "crime" high treason for a Soviet tribunal.

Too late the authorities appeared to realize their mistake. Tikhon was released on a signature of "mea culpa," and immediately began a violent campaign against the dominant reform element, so far with marked success. Churches that adopted reform have reverted not only in the country, where reform is weak—the reformers attempt to contest this—but in the cities. Tikhon is trying to hold now an All-Russian Church Congress with the inclusion of émigré prelates, which it is stated the authorities are willing to allow. He may not quite regain control even then, but the effect of the schism cannot fail further to increase the impotence of the Orthodox church.

## THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY

Moscow, *October 22, 1921*.—"The real meaning of the New Economic Policy is that we have met a great defeat in our plans and that we are now making a strategic retreat," said N. Lenin in one of the frankest admissions of the failure of his policies ever made by a leader of a great nation.

He was speaking last night about the economic change to the delegates from the instruction centers which have recently been established for workers and peasants all over Russia. The delegates represented the "active" or missionary element of the Communist party, which has undertaken the task of making communist doctrine in a sense the official religion of the new Russian state.

"Before Lenin spoke," says the official newspaper, *Izvestia*, "there had been a somewhat acrid discussion regarding the new policy, which many communists cannot fail to regard as an abjuration of their dearest ideals. But, as usual, Lenin's logic vanquished opposition. His statement is clearly intended to close the discussion definitely."

"Our defeat in the economic field, whose problems resemble those of strategy, though even graver and more difficult," said the Soviet chief, "is more serious than any we suffered from the armies of Denikin or Kolchak. We thought the peasants would give us sufficient food to insure the support of the industrial workers, and that we should be able to distribute it. We were wrong, and so we have begun to retreat. Before we are utterly smashed, let us retrace our steps and begin to build on a new foundation.

"It is doubtless inevitable that some of the comrades will not

be pleased with the situation, and even get panicky about it. Yet it happened that all of our military successes were preceded by similar retreats and that the same state of panic was then noticeable in certain quarters. Afterward we began a slow, systematic, and cautious advance, finally crowned by victory. We must follow the same plan in the economic field, where the prime cause of our defeat lay in the fact that our economic policy up above wasn't adequately connected with the lower spheres and thus failed to bring about that revival of productive forces which was considered the principal and urgent part of our plan. The supplying of manufactured goods to the country and its direct relation with the problem of reconstruction in the cities were chiefly responsible for the economic and political crisis of the spring of 1921."

Lenin thus admits that his change of economic front is due to recognition of the fact that communism is at present inadequate to supply the peasants on the one hand with manufactured goods and the urban workers on the other with food. The latter are in much the worse position of the two, for the farmer can wear home-made boots or resharpen his broken knife, but the workman cannot live without food. There are thousands of workers' homes in Moscow today where there is no meat from one month's end to another's, where even bread is too dear, and tea and potatoes are almost the sole diet. Men say that they would be glad to work if there were regular work for them to do, but owing to the lack of machinery and raw materials—to say nothing of the deficiency of technical staffs—there is not enough employment for them to earn a proper living wage.

The problem is further complicated by the fall in the purchasing value of the ruble, due to the steady issue of new paper money, which has caused incessant disputes and even strikes over a wage that a month before seemed at least acceptable.

But while my observation tends to show that for some time at least Russia has little to hope for from foreign concession-



naires in the way of stimulating industry, owing to the fact that details of their dealings with the state and their employees are still to be worked out in practice, the fact remains that the intense demand from thousands of newly opened stores of all categories is bound to resurrect native industry, which the state is doing its utmost to aid with credits and promises, and, as far as possible, with raw materials, technicians, machines, etc.

Moscow, *September 8, 1921*.—Lenin's New Economic Policy has put a severe strain on a good many members of the Communist party. At the same time it affords a typical example of the way rigid party discipline works.

It is not surprising that the rank and file of the party are disgruntled by what looks like a sweeping reversal of most of their theories. For instance, there is now staying in the Moscow Guest House a certain Briton named Urquhart, who before the revolution was the head of a huge Anglo-Russian copper combination in the region of the Urals. Rightly or wrongly Urquhart is credited, especially inside Russia, with having been the chief supporter of Kolchak and Denikin. For communists he has come to personify the arch-fiend of capitalism, but now they see him negotiating concessions with the Soviet government on apparently friendly terms.

Yet such is the communistic discipline that there is never a word of anything but enthusiasm for the economic change. The leaders' attempts to explain reasons or purposes may vary, but that it is a change for the best all are firmly agreed. It was decided upon at a general congress of the Communist party last March, and that decision is binding upon every member.

At this congress upward of 1000 delegates, instructed by various branches throughout Russia, met to discuss the proposed change, which was thrashed out to the minutest detail. Feeling ran high on both sides, and there was a good deal of

opposition, echoes of which trickling out later led to the issuing from Helsingfors and similar agencies of stories of violent quarrels among the Soviet leaders. Finally the change was decided upon and opposition vanished.

That this occurred as far back as March seems to justify the explanation given here that the new policy was not due to panic resulting from the famine, but was the deliberate beginning of Lenin's program of rebuilding the Russian economic system upon foundations he prepared. They say now that the change would have come earlier if the Soviets had not been forced to wait by incessant warfare, civil and foreign.

"It does not," they declare, "represent reversion to the capitalist system as the latter obtains in Europe and America, for adequate measures will be taken through the labor unions to prevent exploitation of the workers." In fact the latter phrase has become the formula by which many communists solve the new equation by which communism in Russia henceforth is to be expressed. Provided the workers are safeguarded from exploitation by finance-capital, there is nothing inconsistent in private ownership—or rather lease-hold—or liberty given to private trade. This reasoning is subtle, but it is strengthened by the fact that concessions revert to the state after a period varying from twenty-five to sixty years—no long period in the life of an undeveloped country like Russia.

The New Economic Policy of the Soviet government is mainly the result of the increasingly difficult position of the urban workers, who have been the principal support of the Bolsheviks since their first struggle for power in 1917.

Many close observers of the Russian revolution, sympathetic observers at that, have maintained that it is divided into two distinct and different parts—the complex movement toward communism of the "class-conscious" workers and the simple satisfaction of land hunger by the peasants, who were little better than slaves on the soil they worked.

Pursuing this reasoning, it has been predicted that sooner or later there will come a show-down between the two sections, and the question arises whether the peasants will be converted to communism before the industrial masses are practically eliminated through lack of sustenance or enforced return to the land.

Had Russian industry not been hampered by the blockade of the Allies and incessant war, it might have been possible to have nationalized the urban industry to produce enough to set going smoothly the machinery of exchange of manufactured goods for surplus food, which was the communist aim. As things happened, this was not accomplished. Discouraged on the one hand by military requisitions, both of man-power and food stocks, and on the other by inability to get the manufactured goods they wanted, the peasants have tended to limit food production to their own requirements, and the urban population is being slowly but surely starved out in consequence. Of course it has not got to that even in this year of famine, but it is sufficiently clear that such is the line things were taking.

The communist delegates who decided on the economic change by a majority vote at the party congress last March did so on instructions from various centers all of which had carefully reviewed the proposals beforehand. This means that said proposals were canvassed right from the beginning of the year, before the famine was expected by more than a very few. The famine did little more than bring home to the mass of the party the necessity for change which was already obvious to Lenin and other leaders.

The new policy is a concession not to capitalism, but to the peasants. The clauses in the decree embodying it which establish liberty of private trading and encourage the use of money are destined to reassure the peasant producer that he will be able to sell food and buy manufactured goods with the proceeds. The clauses directed to the stimulation of industrial production by the lease of factories and the reintroduction of the system of

bonuses, etc., are destined to provide manufactured goods for the peasant to buy. Unless this can be done, virtual elimination of urban workers will occur.

At present they are on mighty short commons. The reason is not wholly the famine, for, as Kamenev himself pointed out, the harvest in the rest of Russia so far exceeded the estimates as to attain the expected total for the whole country, despite the almost total failure of crops in the afflicted area. But even should the new policy fail to check the process of reduction of the industrial elements—through the unwillingness of foreign capital to enter Russia or inability to get the scheme in working order quickly enough—two ways remain for the government to utilize.

The first is the abandonment of the ration system for the urban population in favor of payment to enable them to buy food, whereby a movement toward the cities would be automatically stimulated. This is already being done to a certain degree and could obviously be intensified if the need arose by the simple, if empirical, process of printing more money and raising wages wholesale.

The second is encouragement of petty industry at which, be it noted, the decree embodying the new policy specifically aims. Accompanied by liberty of private trading this would produce the desired result more slowly, but none the less really, than it would be by the reorganization of big industry on a lease basis.

Thus in the market at Samara I have seen peasants buying nails, sandals, metal utensils, sheepskin coats, baskets, etc., which were obviously the work of a single artisan or small group. Even in the famine-stricken villages there was a sale of shoes plaited by cottagers from slips of osier. This represents industrial reconstruction right from the foundations.

It is, in fact, a more cumbrous process than would be its general resurrection with the help of foreign capital, but the busy state of the Samara market—owing to the famine as unpromising an example as one could choose—proves it is genuine enough.

Moscow, *September 10, 1921*.—There is a marked change in Moscow, even in the scant three weeks I have spent here. Whether it is chiefly due to the new liberty of trade, or the feeling that the arrival of the American Relief Administration means that the United States no longer wholly supports the ban of ostracism which pressed so hard upon Russia, matters little. Perhaps it is both, but, anyway, there is a perceptible note of optimism in Moscow. It is as though the Russian giant, dazed by the events of the last seven years, was stirring with the return of life force.

Three weeks ago Moscow looked exactly like one of the larger towns in France, such as Lille, a few days after liberation. There were the same air of dilapidation, the same shuttered shops, the same empty buildings, the same occasional ruins, the same subdued appearance of the people in the same makeshift clothes. Now, under the stimulus of the new decrees that are constantly being issued to regulate the changed economic policy, and under the liberty of private trading, shops, restaurants, and even cafés are being opened in all directions.

This means to the masses concrete proof that the era of "militant communism" is definitely passed, and that the individual will again have a chance to improve his condition and that of his family by his own efforts.

According to all accounts, even the factory operatives are eager to work. For the last three years they have been like schoolboys who wished that there was no such thing as school and found their wish realized. The comparatively few who really understood that the people's ownership of factories and universal equality did not mean the right to loaf on the job and tell the foreman to go to blazes if he remonstrated were unable to stimulate the masses sufficiently. But now the latter, like a boy weary of too much playtime, are beginning to wish school would open again and are ready to accept the discipline

of superior knowledge which they temporarily rejected. The new stores opened in the last fortnight alone must have given employment to tens of thousands of people. The greater part of the population seems to be either selling something or working on something to sell. Every corner in the center of the city has a group of children with trays of matches, cigarettes, fruit, cakes, etc.

The general stimulus is all the more direct and active because the soil has been so long fallow. Today I saw a workman enter a toy shop against the windows of which there pressed a row of eager little faces. He came out carrying a jumping-jack. It was unwrapped, owing to the scarcity of paper.

"My little girl has never had a toy in her life," said the workman. "I bought this with my first week's pay for sewing boots in the big store there on the corner."

Multiply this case by hundreds of millions and you get some idea of the demand throughout Russia.

The facts concerning supply are as follows:

First, Russia has never been, properly speaking, an industrial country. Before the war Russian industry, that is, the manufacture of textiles, leather, metal goods, etc., as opposed to the development of raw materials such as iron, copper, coal, timber, flax, etc., was an artificial creation maintained on the one hand by heavy government subsidies and on the other by tariffs. During the war the virtual cutting off of Russia from the rest of the world, plus even heavier subsidies, stimulated industry further, but still more artificially.

Second, the breakdown of Russian industry during the revolutionary period was no less due to its inherent weakness than to communist theories. So great an authority as Mr. Hoover has ascribed the breakdown wholly to the latter, but the truth is that the overthrow of the Tsar and establishment of the Kerensky regime kicked from under Russian industry the props which

maintained it. The moment subsidies were withdrawn or diminished and the stimulus of the war demand decreased, the factories began to slow down. These are historical facts to which Russian industrialists bear witness.

Third, the period of social indiscipline which was in reality the most alarming feature of the Bolshevik October revolution, gave the coup de grâce to the weakened Russian industry.

From the outset Lenin and Trotsky set themselves to fight this indiscipline, which was anarchy in the worst sense of the word, and today it is little less dangerous to call oneself an anarchist in Russia than to sing "God Save the Tsar" before the Kremlin gate. Trotsky first re-established discipline in the army and gradually social indiscipline was also overcome. But industry remained prostrate.

Perhaps some day history will do justice to the attempts of the communists to revive industry. Impractical as may be their theories, even their enemies in Russia admit the devotion of the communists. To put the case objectively, they have the virtues as well as the faults of the religious enthusiasts they really are. Like all fanatics they are ruthless, narrow minded, and self-centered, but like fanatics they are nevertheless without thought of self. In a country rotten with corruption the communists are honest. In a country where they are all-powerful they live meagerly and, like Lenin, work themselves beyond the limit of physical endurance. So they tried to resuscitate Russian industry despite the handicaps of civil and foreign war, treachery and incompetence.

Gangs of communists, forgetful of cold and hunger, marched through snow to the most unwelcome work on holidays in the hope of galvanizing by example the non-communist laboring masses. They failed, for they were trying to put back life into a corpse—the dead body of Russian industry.

Now the Soviet leaders are trying a different method. They have instituted liberty of internal trade, hoping the internal

demand will bring about through selfish motives the resuscitation which communist unselfishness has been unable to achieve. They have created "trusts"—that is, co-ordinated the interests of different industries—and given them a free hand to build up the chosen industries to their former greatness, and like the Tsar's government, they have subsidized these trusts heavily.

Moscow, *September 19, 1922*.—Lenin has broken his silence due to illness with a short autograph letter to the Congress of the All-Russian Labor Federation now in session here. In simple language he calls attention to the extreme lack of funds and emphasizes the importance of big industry in the socialist state.

A capitalist country, it says, might procure a loan for reconstruction, but Russia is isolated because she refuses to abandon her principles or make further concessions to capitalism—upon this she insists strongly. Thus dependent on her own efforts it is inevitable that things should not go as smoothly as they would if Russia had money for reconstruction, and accordingly the workers see numerous points in the reconstruction process they may not approve.

But they must remember how things used to be under the old regime of masters and landlords and realize that, though the situation is not perfect today, it is better for them than that. If they do not want those days to return, they must work with all their might—work is the only road to victory.

So much for the letter, which is much less important than the circumstances which inspired it. The industrial situation, briefly, is as follows:

Production costs are extremely high owing to terribly low production right along the line. Because of lack of funds it is impossible to break the vicious circle by the importation of raw or semi-raw materials or by subsidizing their quantity production until industry is on its feet again.



Indeed, the situation at the bottom of the industrial ladder is far worse than at the top, where such goods as are produced find a ready sale despite their high price by reason of their shortage. In the Donetz coal and iron basin and in the oil fields the position is nearly desperate, as admitted today by a writer on the front page of *Pravda*.

"The oil industry is on the verge of ruin," he cries. "We must have money to pay the workers. They can't live without pay, and until the industrial machine gets properly running again there is no pay to give them."

It is the same or worse in the Donetz basin. This being the case, the Soviet leaders had to tackle the problem of how to keep skilled workmen from slipping back to the land—where at least they could earn a living—at a time when, on the contrary, every interest of the state demanded that they should be producing to the limit.

There was a simple remedy—"make 'em work, work at the point of the bayonet"—as any Tory reactionary might say. Strange as it may seem the proletariat government was on the verge of adopting the same system. But Lenin knew better and that is why he has taken a hand by writing this letter to the Labor Federations instead of, according to schedule, waiting for his re-entry into the public eye at the opening of the Communist Party Congress on November 7.

If one reads between the lines of Lenin's letter it is clear he is opposed to the policy of force and in favor of a policy of appeal to the workers to grin and bear it until things improve. Lenin is always right about Russia, because he knows and others only think. So the letter means that coercion is not to be used upon the workmen.

Moscow, *October 19, 1922*.—One of the dramatic moments in the history of Russia and one of its profoundest riddles were

visualized last night before the eyes of American correspondents in the ex-Imperial Theater of Moscow. The occasion was the speech of Trotsky to the Young Communist League to celebrate their "adoption" of the Red fleet.

Imagine you are sitting right in the orchestra of the huge theater, the dazzling chandeliers of which are reflected in barbaric richness, the gold decorations festooned, yet not concealed, by wreaths and wrapping of red cloth. On the stage there are a number of simply dressed, bearded men sitting at red-draped tables. Save for Red Army men and save for an almost equal number of burly sailors in blue uniforms they might be members of a chamber of commerce.

But the crowd in the body of the theater, huddled in groups of five on three seats or in clusters of twenty in boxes meant for eight, strikes a vivid contrast. They are young and noisy, evidently enjoying themselves immensely. You can hardly tell the boys from the girls—the popular outfit for both sexes is a high, buttoned-up, black leather tunic and a mop of unruly yellow hair. They shout across to each other or break out in dissonant choruses. They cheer like college boys when the flag of the Red fleet is intrusted to their keeping.

And then suddenly there is a hush and the laughing, eager young faces harden and their enlarging eyes are on a figure in a black uniform with gold buttons which appears without warning on the left of the stage. It is Trotsky. For a fraction of a second there is silence, then a roar of cheering echoes and re-echoes across the theater.

Here is a historic and dramatic moment—Trotsky, the man whose unsparing energy made the Soviet revolution live, has come to appeal to the boys and girls to save that revolution. Here is the riddle—can the individual boy by his own force and personality defeat the force of circumstances and coerce even "natural" laws into obedience?

Tonight Trotsky spoke to them to key them to desperate

endeavor. Like the skilled psychologist that he is, he reiterated the appeal to patriotism, to the new nationalism that is such a remarkable feature of this Russia in her fury of international revolution. He told how French warships in 1920 forced him to release a seized consignment of aeroplanes for Wrangel by threatening to bombard the open city of Odessa, and he held up the warning of Germany prostrate beneath the feet of her enemies, forced to rely upon Hugo Stinnes, master of arch-capitalists, "enriched by the money depreciation that has ruined millions of his countrymen," for a settlement of the most vital question of reparations. Again and again they cheered him as he spoke with bitter irony of "militarism" forced upon Russia by the flat refusal of the European powers to heed her oft-repeated demands for disarmament and peace.

But behind all the easy mastery over such a crowd for such an orator as Trotsky there is the question whether he can hold them definitely for the future. A few days ago Trotsky put before the same audience of Young Communists the real battle the Soviet was now fighting, the battle against the capitalist and bourgeois system, to which in the past eighteen months it has been forced to give ground, even in Russia. He told them how the capitalists were more strong and clever, how they enlisted on their side trained specialists who ought to be in the ranks of the workers.

"It is a heavy and difficult burden I put on you," he told them, "and our goal is far distant, far on the tops of the mountains. But you are young and strong and able to bear the burdens as we bore them, we who suffered and labored that you might be free. In the years just past your elders could fight and die for our revolution, but today your task is no less difficult than ours. You must work, set your teeth in the cruel granite of education and hold it fast till you master it, for only by education, your education, can we hold what we have won."

Trotsky's two speeches to the Young Communist organiza-

tion have surprised even his admirers. The position of the Soviet government today, though sure enough physically, is, from the revolutionary, or others might say, socialist viewpoint, unsatisfactory. After five years of struggle the Bolsheviks have reached a point where their industries, reduced to 20, or at the outside, 15 percent of the pre-war figures, are producing at a loss and their agriculture has already come back to within 35 or 40 percent of pre-war and bids fair next year to approximate the pre-war average. As the Bolsheviks well know, the peasants are individualists, not socialists; or, to put it differently, potential bourgeois rather than class-conscious proletariat. The latter, of course, means industrial workers, who are not only being overwhelmed by the relative peasant prosperity, but are actually "deserting to the enemy," as one after another yields to the temptation to return to the land and win from it a comparatively easy living.

Caught in a vicious circle of low production right along the line, the Bolsheviks have not got the money to subsidize their industry. Consequently they are compelled to appeal to private capital, whether native or foreign.

From the American standpoint the whole matter may appear simple enough. "You say these Bolsheviks are the masters of Russia, and Russia is one of the richest countries potentially in the world. Then why don't they go ahead and develop it or get it developed on sensible business lines?"

The answer is the Bolsheviks do not think along "common-sense" lines at all. They are enthusiasts and idealists, with a burning religious faith in the communist millennium on earth, though they now know it to be little less distant than heaven.

Trotsky knows this, but he is a man of extraordinary determination and personal courage. In the first days of the revolution he faced alone a mob of several hundred sailors enraged by what they considered injustice to their darling, Dibenko, shouting for Trotsky's blood. Trotsky broke from his subordinates, who were

advising him to flee or hide, and plunged through the mob to the stone pedestal where the nobles once mounted their horses, crying, "You want Trotsky; here he is!"

Undaunted by the bellow of the infuriated crowd, he told them why Dibenko had been punished and where he had fallen short of that utter self-sacrifice to the cause of the revolution which he, Trotsky, demanded and was prepared to give. The crowd that had come to kill him carried him triumphantly around the courtyard.

That is Trotsky; and the same utter devotion he demanded from Dibenko he and other leaders still give to the cause of communism. But he and they are no less clearsighted than devoted. They realize the world revolution, which in 1917, 1918, and 1919 they thought imminent, is now incalculably distant. They realize they must compromise with the "Mammon of unrighteousness," with capitalism. All this Trotsky is frank enough to admit in his speeches to the Young Communists. But with all his burning, fiery faith he maintained that the compromise need not mean capitulation; that if only his hearers would buckle down to solid, unromantic work they could fight capitalism on its own ground and still retain the ideals of the revolution.

To outsiders all this may seem mere hair-splitting. But here in Russia it has great importance, for, after all, the Bolsheviki are masters of Russia and Russian policy will be determined by their mental reactions.

And so Trotsky's speeches demonstrate three things. First, the Soviet government is not content with having freed the masses from the rule of the Tsar or nobles; second, it admits capitalism to Russia not as the only practicable system in the modern world, but as a means toward its own communist end, however distant that end may be; third, no matter how fairly it may treat capitalists and however advantageous to them may be the agreements it gives, it still regards them as enemies.

Moscow, *November 15, 1922*.—Premier Lenin addressed the delegates to the Communist International in the Kremlin throne room today.

On the dais where imperial majesty sat in golden pomp crowned with diamonds and robed in ermine, Lenin stood, a stocky little man in a plain sack suit, fumbling at his papers on a lecturer's desk before him—Lenin with an authority beyond that of the greatest Tsar, master and lord of new Russia, rising like a phoenix strong and young from the fire of revolution and the ashes of the past. The contrast was symbolic of human progress. Pomp, majesty, and hereditary state gave place to the only sovereignty the modern world admits—the power of brain and will.

By that power Lenin rules. By it alone. For he lacks Trotsky's eloquence and magnetism, Radek's persuasiveness, and Zinoviev's grim enthusiasm. And, unlike Western demagogues, he never seeks to flatter an audience or appeal to their preferences and emotions. His authority is based on the more solid foundation of greater brain power—better judgment, deeper reasoning, truer analysis of facts.

Lenin closely resembles the "Grand Lunar" of Wells's romance whose authority was unquestioned because his intelligence was radically superior. In Wells's story the "Grand Lunar" had so little save an ultra-developed brain that he could not move unaided, could hardly think without a host of attendants hushing away intruding noises and spraying cooling fluid on his quivering brain cover.

So today one saw a stout Italian delegate become purple with a successful effort to suppress a cough, and anxiety in the cynical face and eagle eyes of Trotsky, that aristocrat of the revolution, and even in Zinoviev's cruel countenance. It was pathetic, too, how they watched him as his speech went on beyond the appointed limits. So strong was their uneasiness you could feel it strike you in regular waves. And when at last he finished, tele-

pathic messages of relief from his closest intimates on the platform cut unmistakably through the thunder of applause from the body of the hall.

For just as the observer got the dominant impression of Lenin's total mastery over Russia—and over the Communist parties beyond Russia's boundaries—so, too, one could sense his weakness—the speaker's spirit over-strong for his fleshly envelope, and anxiety lest over-use of his brain over-tax the resistance of Lenin's body.

It is hard for an American to understand just what Lenin's speech to the Communist delegates meant today. But suppose you were a fanatic adherent of a cause that your sober judgment must condemn as far from a success in your own country. You cross seas and continents with more or less difficulty and danger and you come to a land where until five years ago autocracy, a hundredfold harsher than that against which the founders of the American nation rebelled, had been all-powerful. There in the throne room which was that autocracy's heart you wait to see the man who overthrew it.

The buzz of conversation dies as he shuffles onto the stage before you. For a period you join in the frantic applause. Then you watch him, this little man in his plain suit, standing there modestly, almost humbly. He speaks in German, not very well, pausing occasionally or even asking a word from those beside him. At first, though the silence is complete, you can hardly hear him. Then his voice strengthens and you listen with feverish eagerness for his message. But it is no world revolution, no fiery cross of rebellion, he is preaching. Far from it.

"We went too far," he says, "and we have found nothing is final, that always we must learn from circumstances. We started transformation too fast, without sufficient force behind us. We were like an army that got too far in advance of its base. We found the peasants and small bourgeoisie that form the

vast numerical majority of our country were against us. To retain power we had to satisfy them."

This is no pæan of revolutionary triumph such as you might have expected after watching the serried ranks of the revolutionary forces march past you in tens of thousands, equipped, disciplined, and aflame with martial ardor, in Petrograd and Moscow. Nor is Lenin apologizing—far from it. You realize he is setting forth the reasons why Russia exchanged the pure principles of communism for a new economic policy.

"In February last year," he says, "the peasants that form the majority of our population, and even inhabitants of the towns and cities, were protesting. Their masses realized we were trying to cut corners too sharply. The situation was critical, so we decided unanimously for the change of policy necessary and instituted a new system more in accordance with their needs.

"Today, instead of opposing us, the peasant masses are with us, small industry and commerce are reborn and working for the general benefit and satisfaction. Only heavy industry is backward. For that we need money, 100,000,000 gold rubles at a minimum. We have only 20,000,000 available. With that we do what we can but need more.

"To maintain the success of our revolution the proletarian class must retain power. How? The land of Russia still belongs to the state and the basic industries remain in the state's hands. Where we have admitted capitalism we remain its master. There are mixed companies, half state and half foreign or native capitalists, but the state retains control of them and after using them to acquire commercial knowledge can dissolve them when it will. Thus there is no danger in this close association with the capitalist enemy.

"But we are far from perfect. We make mistakes, just as other countries make them. We waste money. The most urgent necessity of the near future is rigid economy, even in such branches



as education, which we are most anxious to develop. We above all need education—from political understanding down to the simple knowledge of how to read and write. Through education we can force our own expansion and so extend our theories to other countries, that we may show their people what a proletarian revolution really means.”

Thus Lenin’s speech is no apology or excuse for the abandonment of pure communism. Still less is it a harangue to the protagonists of world revolution. It is simply a straightforward exposition of the facts that made the New Economic Policy in Russia inevitable, plus a brief résumé of that policy’s results.

Of world revolution or world communist policy, of the “united front” of world labor, he said nothing. Nor did he touch international politics. He aimed to show his hearers, first, why Russia exchanged pure communism for state capitalism and, second, why the change was necessary and justified by results. Beyond doubt he succeeded.

Moscow, *January 16, 1923*.—It is hard work being a Bolshevik leader these days, when the fate of Europe again seems hanging in the balance. At this critical moment five men, working twenty hours a day, have the whole weight of Russia on their shoulders. They are Trotsky, Stalin, Kamenev, Dzerzhinsky, and Rykov.

Lenin is resting in the country, not seriously ill, as reported abroad, and able even to write occasional articles for the official newspapers, but certainly unable to take an active part in the national councils.

Zinoviev, who, with Lenin and those members of the inner council just named, controls the Central Executive Committee, which in turn determines Russian policy, is also taking a rest imperatively ordered.

Lunacharsky, the Minister of Education, is seriously ill with heart trouble.

Rykov, Lenin's substitute on the Council of Labor and Defense, is worn out with his work and just manages to keep going on a couple of hours' sleep out of the twenty-four. Trotsky, the Red war lord, and Dzerzhinsky, Minister of Railroads and the Interior, who controls the "Gay Pay Oo" (G.P.U.), as the Russian revolutionary tribunal is now called, seem made of iron.

Kamenev, in addition to his work on the inner council, is President of the Moscow Soviet, a post which entails an enormous amount of municipal detail.

There is also the President of the Russian Union, Kalinin, whose advice on all matters likely to affect the vast peasant masses is of the greatest value.

Finally, there is the Georgian, Stalin, little known abroad, but one of the most remarkable men in Russia and perhaps the most influential figure here today. Stalin is officially the head of the Ministry for the nations that constitute the Soviet Union and, more important still, General Secretary of the Communist party. But his influence is not measured by his official position. To understand it requires an elucidation of the working of the system of the mysterious inner council—Council of Five, as it is sometimes called—which is the central authority of Soviet Russia.

Knowledge of this system explains the source of Lenin's power. Lenin has often been called the "Red dictator." This designation is wrong; Lenin never had the right to dictate, although in practice his opinion generally carried the day. To take an American parallel, imagine the inner council to be made up of the most important members of the directorate—which corresponds to the Central Executive Committee—of any big corporation. The board of directors meets, say, once a month, but each meeting is preceded by a sort of caucus of these important members, which really decides the policy to be submitted to their colleagues. How are the group's decisions reached? In Russia, at any rate, and probably in the biggest

American corporations also, by a process of exhaustive argument. If you have a small group with common aims, entire sincerity, and unusual intelligence and logical ability, there is little time wasted in discussion that might hopelessly tie up the work of a larger or less homogeneous body. These men approach any subject from a double angle. What are the facts of the case, and what must be their policy in relation to these facts? One or all give their views. There are criticism and discussion. Finally a common basis is reached on both.

The secret of Lenin's authority, which did in fact amount to dictatorship, was that long experience had proved him right far oftener than his colleagues. It is said that once, at the beginning of the revolution, Lenin, faced by general opposition, wrapped his head in his cloak, saying: "All right! Argue it out for yourselves; but when you've reached the conclusion that my plan is the only possible one wake me up and say so. I'm going to sleep." An hour or two later they waked him and said: "We don't like your plan much more than we did, but we agree that it's the only way. You are right." As the event proved, Lenin was right in this case, and scores of others like it gave him such ascendancy that by 1919 or 1920 his opinions were hardly questioned.

But it was supremacy of brain, not of position. By 1921 it was so marked that during the last year, when Lenin was absent through illness, Kamenev had the greatest influence in Russia simply because his colleagues believed that he most accurately interpreted to them Lenin's thought.

But last year, despite the famine, was a year of relatively little stress for the Soviet republics. In the present critical days, when the future of Europe may depend upon decisions by the governments in Paris, London, Berlin, and Moscow, real directing strength is needed. Trotsky is a great executive, but his brain cannot compare with Lenin's in analytical power. Dzerzhinsky goes straight to his appointed goal without fear or favor and

gets there somehow, no matter what are the obstacles, but he also is inferior to Lenin in analytical capacity. Rykov and Kamenev are first-class administrators, and hardly more.

But during the last year Stalin has shown judgment and analytical power not unworthy of Lenin. It is to him that the greatest part of the credit is due for bringing about the new Soviet Union, which history may regard as one of the most remarkable constitutions in human history. Trotsky helped him in drawing it up, but Stalin's brain guided the pen.

Unity of aim and old friendship prevents jealousy among these Bolshevik leaders, joined also by the tremendous bond of common fanaticism. Suppose today Stalin outlines a policy which he thinks should be adopted. Others criticize it, not to weaken it, but to fill in possible holes. Stalin answers. Some amendments are accepted; the majority fail. The final decision is reached only when everyone is convinced that no improvement is possible. Such is the real government of Soviet Russia.

Moscow, *November 22, 1922*.—Premier Lenin made his first public appearance before a mass audience today since his speech eleven months ago at the Congress of the All-Russian Soviet. It was at the same place today, the Moscow Grand Opera House, at a session of the Moscow Soviet to open the electoral campaign for the All-Russian Congress next month. The meeting had dragged on through two somewhat dreary hours enlivened only by a gallant attempt by a seventeen-year-old boy to get the national franchise age lowered from eighteen to sixteen. Suddenly a thrill passed through the crowd of four or five thousand people. There was nothing definite, but the audience sensed the meaning of the bustle on the stage.

Then Kamenev rose and said: "Lenin has come and will now address you," and simultaneously Lenin's gray-clad figure hurried forward to the left front of the stage. The crowd went crazy

with enthusiasm and crash upon crash of cheering drowned the music of the "Internationale."

For ten minutes they shouted though Kamenev with the president's bell and then with sharp gestures copied by others at the central table pleaded vainly for silence. Twice Lenin himself began with "Comrades—" but the people would not be denied. Here before them was their beloved leader who, countless rumors had told them, was insane or paralyzed or even dead and nothing could dam the torrent of their gladness. Lenin stood motionless, then moved back toward the table and then forward again, trying to speak. It was no good; they could not be silenced. At last the uproar ceased, but throughout the three-quarters of an hour the speech lasted, a good third of the audience remained standing in their eagerness to listen.

The speaker's voice was full and strong and audible in every corner of the great theater, but it seemed rather thicker and less clear than last year, though not enough so for anyone to miss his words. There was nothing lacking of virility and fire, either in gesture or delivery.

Lenin spoke without notes simply and directly, often raising a laugh by an apt colloquial phrase or a telling word in slang. He gestured freely and vividly. Again and again he repeated his own special trick of a sudden pause followed by a swift spurt of irony delivered in lower, almost conversational, tone. At the end he hurried away without acknowledging the renewed tumult of applause.

In the speech itself there was little new. Its keynote came in the sentences, "When we set out to make old Russia into a new Russia we had to do a lot of smashing and perhaps we smashed too much. We had not time to think of that or calculate whether the sacrifices we were making were not too great. It was a struggle with the old social order and we had to act, not reflect. We won, and now the main point is not to give away the fruits of that victory. We shall keep what we gained."

They cheered that to the echo as they cheered this statement:

"Vladivostok is ours again. It is a long way off, but it is our town and the Far Eastern Republic is united again to Russia. That proves there is nothing wrong with our foreign policy. All the great powers were against us, but despite them Vladivostok is our own Russian town."

Then Lenin read them the lesson of new Russia and her need:

"The shift from the old Russia to the new is difficult, very difficult. Even if communists have to turn themselves inside-out to do it, they must make our New Economic Policy work. Russian legislation now gives foreign capitalists a chance to make profits, keep their own methods, and do business. But capitalists will give nothing for nothing—there is no free help coming from them. We will hold fast till we force them to help us.

"First and chiefly we must learn to handle our own administration. The time is past for looking on socialism as a holy icon. We must work out a practical socialism for ourselves so that not only the communists but the great majority of peasants and workers will admit the new regime is better than the old.

"The communists are but a small party to remake mighty Russia. We have not done it yet, but we will do it—we must do it. If we work hard enough, some day soon we can again have a change—a change of Russia of the New Economic Policy into a Russia of socialism."

LONDON, *September 7, 1923*.—Living conditions in Russia have enormously improved in the past two years.

When I first visited Moscow, in August 1921, it was a doleful city, whose ill-dressed inhabitants drifted aimlessly through the streets. Almost all the stores were shut, with boarded-up or broken windows. Here and there a listless crowd waited at the door of some state or co-operative supply depot. The buildings lacked paint and plaster and the only means of transport for the

public were decrepit hacks or filthy street cars, each with a cluster of people like a bee swarm hanging somehow round the door. Traffic control was deplorable and governmental automobiles raced through the city like mad things.

Today old residents agree that Moscow is not much different from pre-war days with the exception that luxurious private carriages have still to make their reappearance. The stores are well stocked and apparently flourishing despite the onerous taxes and the high prices of manufactured goods.

Food is plentiful and costs slightly less than it did before the war. Expensive restaurants and gambling rooms prove that there is plenty of money in circulation, although, speaking generally, wages are from 60 to 80 percent of the pre-war level. In some favored trades such as carpenters and electric appliance workers the pay is from 20 to 40 percent over the pre-war basis.

Streets and houses have been cleaned and repaired and there is now begun a fair amount of building to remedy the still serious overcrowding.

Traffic control is excellent and—an important indication of the re-establishment of social discipline—managed without fuss or friction.

The condition of Moscow may be reckoned as 25 percent ahead of the rest of Russia, but similar, if slower, improvement is visible everywhere. The essential fact is that everyone is so infinitely better off than during the "black years" of 1920 and 1921 that present conditions seem paradise by comparison.

This fact naturally influences the political situation. Taking five great sections of the Russian people—the peasants, industrial workers, state officials and employees, artists and professional men, and business people, large and small—there is none not feeling that Russia has emerged from night into day.

The peasants hope that the onerous local taxation, which was one of their chief grievances last year, will be eliminated by the

new single tax—averaging from 12 to 15 percent of their total crop—instituted this year. Their other grievance, the high price of manufactured goods as compared to the low price of grain, still remains. This hampers all sections of the population and can only be removed by the restoration of production on a wide scale.

The industrial workers are relatively better off than the peasants, although hit by high prices and short time or limited activity in many industries. But at least they get paid regularly now—which was not the case last year—in “trade rubles,” of which the index figure is fixed by the month, according to the purchasing power of the pre-war gold ruble. Through the co-operatives they can also buy manufactured goods much cheaper than the peasants whose co-operatives have greater opportunities for the graft still prevalent in Russia.

The industrial workers of Moscow grumble about the overcrowding—the population of the city is fully 60 percent higher than before the war—and about the luxury displayed by the “Nepmen,” the newly rich traders and speculators.

State officials and employees, including those of the state industries, are now fairly well and regularly paid, according to a scale equivalent to 50 to 60 percent of the pre-war salary for similar jobs. The majority, however, work shorter hours and get living quarters at a specially low rate, and pay the lowest scale taxes—which is also true of the industrial workers.

Artists probably suffered less than any other class during the black years, especially those connected with opera or theater, which the Bolsheviki always fostered.

Professors and teachers are less fortunate, especially if the authorities had reason to believe they were sympathetic with the old regime. Even recently many have been exiled or imprisoned. Many owe their lives to the relief work made possible by the American Students' Fund, which supplied tens of thou-



sands with food and clothing. The position of the majority is still markedly inferior to what it was before the war, with the exception of the communist professors.

Poets, painters, and writers now have a good market for their work. The majority also have founded social clubs wherein the profits from visitors provide the members with a living.

Doctors and lawyers are fairly comfortable, though it is a question whether many approach their pre-war earnings. All brain workers, unless employed by state institutions, pay taxes on a considerably higher scale than manual laborers, and suffer greatly from the high price of clothes, shoes, linen, etc.

If the business men in Moscow pay taxes duly, it is a wonder they are able to live. They do live, however, and spend money freely, so evidently things are better than they appear on paper. Private stores are constantly shut owing to taxation, but always a new aspirant to fortune reopens soon afterward.

The tax collectors and officials claim there is a good deal of hook and crook in Russian business. They are probably not wrong, as it is estimated that upward of 250,000 private traders have migrated to Moscow since the Nep began, two years ago. They crowd the restaurants where it costs \$25 a head for dinner with French wine, pay \$800 for a second-hand "flivver," and lose a thousand or so an evening at baccarat without turning a hair.

"Taxes," said one of these Nepmen to me a month ago, "for the business man are a joke—we don't pay, but pass them on to the customers."

Moscow, *November 16, 1923*.—Russia is now facing a crisis whose gravity is not diminished by the fact that it is potential and latent rather than immediate and acute. The source of this trouble is the purchasing power of the peasant which is almost wiped out by the huge disproportion between prices of food

products and manufactured goods as compared with before the war. The result is increasing business stagnation.

The Soviet government has resolved on the most vigorous measures to meet the situation, but the suggestions proposed to date seem palliatives, rather than remedies.

The prime cause of the whole trouble is, first, the greatly lowered production right along the line from raw material to finished goods. This makes it impossible to manufacture cheaply. The second cause is the greatly lowered demand from the impoverished peasantry, which is unable to absorb any such volume of goods as cheap mass production, if it could be attained, would put on the market.

The name "scissors" was given by Trotsky to the diagram illustrating an article he published in *Pravda* a few months ago on the ratio between the prices of food and manufactured goods. The "scissors" were two divergent lines, the upper showing the trend of goods prices above the pre-war level, the lower the trend of food prices below the pre-war level. "To make the two meet on the old level," said Trotsky, "is the greatest problem before us today, for on it depends the proper adjustment of relations between the workers and the peasants and the closing of these scissors means the establishment of Lenin's remarkable link between the rural and urban populations."

At the time Trotsky wrote, the jaws of the scissors were not unduly far apart. The ratio between a pood of rye, taken as the unit for food, and a yard of *sittits*, the cheapest cotton cambric, as the unit for manufactured goods, was only 1 to 3 as compared with pre-war conditions. At the end of July grain prices had risen as the result of exports, but manufactured goods had risen faster still, and a pood of rye had only one-fourth its pre-war purchasing power. A month ago grain was lower after the harvest, but the prices of manufactured goods were soaring like a balloon. They were fully three times higher than in London, and with the scissors at full stretch the pood of rye

bought hardly more than one-eighth of the amount of sittings it represented before the war.

As might have been expected, the peasants' complaints rose to clamor, and the government took action. Now, after a month's campaign, the scissors' jaws have closed a trifle; the ratio is 6.6 to 1 instead of 7.9 to 1. Meanwhile the state "trusts," as the financial, industrial, and merchandising organizations under government control are called here, are being subjected to merciless scrutiny and pressure. Their staffs are being reduced, their overhead is being lowered, and their expenses are being cut in every direction. An obligatory decrease in selling prices all along the line was ordered—in some cases as much as 15 to 20 percent—whether it meant the elimination of profits or not. The search for grafters became tenfold keener under the probably well-founded impression of the authorities that a good deal of the apparent overhead waste and bad business really meant that some individual or group was lining its pockets at the public expense.

For the importance of the question from the point of view of the Soviet government cannot be exaggerated. Unless the scissors close, the sacrifice of the pure communist system made two years ago must be extended to the present regime of state control, and private enterprise must receive greater opportunity.

The answer to both problems is one and the same—money, credits to industry to enable it to produce more and cheaper, credits to the peasantry to enable it to absorb goods produced, for which, by the way, their need is imperative. But money on the scale required is precisely what the Soviet government has not. In the past it gave such credits as it could afford to industry but the production was so reduced and so expensive as compared with before the war that the peasants could not buy. Nevertheless, industry went on producing until warehouses were filled with unsalable goods.

Now it is proposed to throw these on the market and to give

credits to the peasants to buy them. But this is only a palliative because the goods are to be sold below the production cost and the amount of credit available for peasants is insufficient to cover more than a fraction of their needs.

Other proposals—greater concentration of industry, scrapping factories that can't work profitably without credit or subsidies, and increased severity toward grafters, etc.—not only won't secure cheap production but have the additional political disadvantage of throwing out of employment a large number of urban workers.

Cumbrous and faulty though the state industry machine may be, justice forces one to admit that the effects of graft, overhead expenses, and mismanagement have been greatly exaggerated. They may be responsible for 15 or 20 percent of the increased cost of the finished products, but the remaining 80 is due to lowered production and the lowered purchasing power of the peasants.

Which all comes back to the fact that nothing but money—big money—will solve a problem whose importance the Soviet leaders regard as absolutely vital.

The question remains whence this money will be forthcoming, since Russia has not got it. I found in London that there is plenty of money available for Russia—most of it in the form of credits for machinery, etc., that England wants to sell, and a considerable amount also for investment in Russian industry—provided that the investors could have sufficient confidence.

In Paris, too, there are being carried on serious negotiations with a view to French aid in Russian reconstruction. Just how far they have proceeded is hard to say, but M. Sokolnikov, Russian Finance Minister, informed the executive committee of the All-Russian Federation a few days ago that "there are fair prospects of a state loan being floated abroad."

On what terms? The answer is inevitable both on logical and

economic grounds: Russia must recognize her liability for her foreign debts.

The recognition at one stroke will give confidence to foreign investors and save Russia from the excessive rate of interest she otherwise would have to pay for such credit as may be forthcoming.

But there are two serious obstacles. The first is that the governing Communist party has always told the people of Russia, "We won't repay to foreign capitalists the money they lent the Tsar to enable him to oppress you."

The second is the stand the Soviet government took at The Hague, that the discussion of the principle of debt recognition was only possible with "the Allies" as a bloc, and if they agreed to give Russia a loan.

The first difficulty is the harder to overcome, but the Soviet leaders might tell the public, "We are willing to make concessions to foreigners in order to help you in your present sore need." The second is made awkward by the illness of Lenin, who possesses to the supreme degree the twofold quality of seeing clear to the heart of a problem and finding the formula that will reconcile its solution with the Marxist principles.

"At the time of the Brest-Litovsk peace," says M. Radek, in a recent article, "Lenin told us, 'You are like a hen that is hypnotized by a chalk line drawn around her. You are worse, even, than the hen, because she didn't draw the line, whereas you let yourselves be hypnotized by your own principles and cannot find a way out of the barrier they impose.'"

That is approximately their position today.

Moscow, *December 6, 1923*.—The Soviet government's program for dealing with the economic situation is now being made public. It contemplates the establishment of a land bank to aid the peasants, the reform of the co-operative associations, the

further concentration of industry, and the reorganization of the internal mechanism of the Communist party.

The situation, which is still serious, was at its worst two or three months ago, as may be judged from the fact that Stalin today announces, in discussing the reorganization of the Communist party, that there was "a wave of strikes" during August and the early autumn.

Such proof of discontent among the industrial workers has so far had no parallel in the ranks of the peasants, whose most prosperous period is naturally in the months just after harvest. Nevertheless, they have already shown what they think of the present excessive prices of manufactured goods by refusing to buy until prices fall, and the Soviet leaders are far too good psychologists not to realize that if many more months elapse without improvement of the situation the peasant dissatisfaction will take more concrete form. I do not mean that they will actually be driven to revolt, as they were in the Tambov and Saratov districts before Lenin put his New Economic Policy in force, but it is understood that there are in the background the dangers of passive resistance to paying taxes and the still deadlier threat of sowing only enough grain for their own needs.

Accordingly, the establishment of a land bank to provide as extensive credits as are physically possible is one of the first items on the agenda of the All-Russian Soviet Federation, which will meet the middle of next month.

The outline of the decree to reform the co-operatives was published yesterday in *Economic Life* and will probably be ratified by the Central Executive Committee before the end of the year. Its chief feature consists in restoring the voluntary character of membership in the peasant co-operatives instead of making membership obligatory, as has been the case, theoretically at least, since the pure communist period from 1918 to 1921.

The new decree brings the co-operatives fully back to the pre-

communist status and completes for the peasants the economic freedom toward which the New Economic Policy aimed.

The internal reorganization of the Communist party is directed precisely to the same end. Stalin shows all of Lenin's frankness in admitting party weaknesses. The communists must get away from the system of militant communism (that of the 1918-1921 period), he tells them, and make the party more democratic by increasing the knowledge and activities of the inferior groups. Communists must not be content to let bureaucracy do their work for them, but must investigate things themselves and try to help the government machine. The workers' groups must keep up their connection with the peasants and vice versa; all must collaborate toward the common end.

If local groups complain that they are forced to accept officials from above, owing to the lack of training of their own members, they should not fold their hands and follow such officials blindly, but should try to improve their own knowledge in order to assume official posts in the future. The communists in the rural districts, Stalin says, must help educate the peasants and show them that the present economic difficulties are due to many circumstances against which the Soviet government is fighting its hardest. The communists in the cities must keep in close touch with the industrial workers and convince them that the concentration of industry and other remedial measures are for the general benefit despite the individual hardship they may occasion.

For there is an obvious political difficulty in closing such factories as further concentration will require. When one considers the relatively small number of industrial workers in Russia, the unemployment figures for the whole country—a little more than 800,000—compare unfavorably with those of Great Britain, where unemployment is one of the major questions of the day. To increase unemployment, even temporarily, in the depth of

the Russian winter, is a step from which any government might shrink.

But the Bolsheviki pride themselves on facing facts and are prepared to take this risk. They have considerable reason for confidence. At present the strike agitation has disappeared as the result of the prompt payment of all industrial workers on a gold basis. The peasants, too, have proof that something is being done for them, inasmuch as it is announced that grain prices in the Odessa district are equivalent to those prevailing before the war, and prices of manufactured goods have already decreased on an average throughout the country not less than 35 percent.



## THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CIVIL LIBERTY

Moscow, *February 7, 1922*.—Civil liberty is the next great concession to be made by the Soviet government. For the last ten days there have been meetings of legal experts and judicial and executive authorities to organize a new system that will guarantee to the people of Russia rights as enjoyed by other countries.

Hitherto, it may be said, Russia has been under "a state of siege" whereby individual liberties were restricted as in France or Germany during the war. Now the state of siege has ended, and a return to peace-time conditions is about to take place. In other words, Russia is now writing the preamble to her "constitution," and habeas corpus is to be substituted for summary arrest and court-martial.

Instead of a terrible agency with unlimited powers of search, arrest, arbitrary judgment, and execution, the "Vee-Cheka" (the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission), is to be assimilated like the United States Department of Justice or the English Scotland Yard under control of the Home Office.

Few non-communist Russians can speak the word "Cheka" without a shudder. Created soon after the Bolshevik revolution, the Cheka was developed by Dzerzhinsky with ruthless and fanatic energy. In his hands it became not a political police force alone, but the veritable word of the Soviet government. Its picked battalions rushed to every danger point, first in the cities and later on to the front against the "White" generals. Its armed agents were in every large town and on every railroad. It carried as a great political organization its own prisons, its own tribunals, and its own firing squads.

To this day there are people in Moscow who make a detour rather than walk the pavement in front of 2 Lubianka, the headquarters where the prisoners of the Cheka were first examined, so deep was the terror it evoked.

The Vee-Cheka operated by night, arrested persons and then vanished, and their fate remained a mystery. Its very name was taboo, and strange, horrible stories were told of the manner of its executions. No man knew who might be one of its agents, or into what a careless word might involve him and his family.

It was in 1919, 1920, and 1921 that the "Red terror" became most dreadful, for then the suppression of "speculation," which meant any form of buying or selling, and the concealment of money or valuables—both penal offenses under the strict communist regime—were added to the Cheka's activities. A terrible factor aided the Chekists and increased the horror at that time, namely, denunciations—thousands of letters, often anonymous, or whispered information pouring into the Cheka's office, denouncing this man or that woman as a "speculator" or a concealer of valuables.

Where the vengeance of the Cheka claimed hundreds of victims, private spite took a toll of thousands and tens of thousands. Just imagine what it meant in practice. If a wife was tired of her husband or he of his wife, if a servant had a grudge against his former master or an employee against his former boss, it meant a few words to the Cheka and then—silence. Of course the Cheka bears the responsibility before history, but the blame rests not entirely on the Cheka.

Valuable as the effect thus produced may have been to the Soviet government in the difficult days in 1919 when its fate seemed hanging by a hair, the subsequent reaction in Russia, and more especially abroad, did it infinite harm. The bogey it had created became the symbol of its murderous rule and fantastic stories were told of millions of Cheka victims, hideous blood baths, and executions en masse.

In point of fact, it is doubtful whether the total number of Cheka executions throughout the whole period up to 1922 surpasses 50,000. I once asked a group of bitterly anti-Bolshevik Englishmen, most of whom were in Russia when the revolution occurred, in which all lost dear friends or property, what they estimated the total Cheka executions at. No one put the figure higher than a hundred thousand for the whole country. The majority placed it much lower. One, quoting as an analogy the French revolution, whose victims the great historian Michelet estimates at 4000—put it as low as 20,000.

Though lives were cheap in Russia and the Cheka leaders pitiless in defending the revolution when in danger, they would have defeated their own object by the wholesale slaughter of workers and peasants on the scale reported abroad. Nor are such men as Dzerzhinsky or Latsis, now head of the State Salt Trust, the bestial butchers they have been depicted. In a remarkable monograph on terrorism, Latsis declared that the object of "terror" is to create the maximum effect at the minimum cost. "Thus it is better," he said, "to execute ten, twenty, or even a hundred persons immediately at a critical moment than by hesitation, either merciful or anxious, to allow a rebellion to break out, which would cost thousands of lives before it was suppressed."

The Bolsheviks made little attempt to defend the Cheka on moral grounds. "It was a matter of practical necessity," they say. "The safety of the revolution was at stake. Robespierre fell because he had no such organization to defend him."

But the restrictions of the Vee-Cheka's powers which Lenin promised in a speech before the All-Russian Soviet Congress are now being accomplished, and the wartime wolf that was kept to slay the black sheep in the Soviet fold is being transformed into a peaceful watchdog, whose teeth will only be used against enemies that attempt to break in.

I do not believe the theory one often hears outside Soviet

Russia that the reason of this change was fear in the heart of the Soviet shepherds lest one day the wolf might turn against its master. The view of the Vee-Cheka as a power behind the throne or a government within the government may seem acceptable enough to those looking at Russia from without, but it will not stand up in the light of wider knowledge of the iron discipline of the Communist party and the quality of men like Lenin and Trotsky who hold the destinies of Russia with such a firm unswerving grip. No, the change is not due to their fear nor yet to their desire to placate the hostility of the rest of the world, but to their profound knowledge of Russia's situation and her needs.

During the epoch of civil and foreign war, the Soviet leaders judged the Vee-Cheka necessary and the restriction of individual liberties imperative. Now they greet the dawn of a new and less violent epoch with curtailment of the Vee-Cheka's powers and extension of liberties.

This does not mean that trial by jury or universal vote by ballot will immediately be instituted. Curious as it may seem to the people of the American democracy, the Soviet leaders believe their electoral and judiciary systems better or at least better suited to the Russian people today than the electoral and judiciary systems which obtain in America.

So the jury, which they think is too easily swayed by the eloquence of a defending lawyer or prosecuting attorney, or overawed and browbeaten by a judge, will still be replaced in Russia by the "lay judges," if one may so term them, sitting on a bench behind the presiding judge, nearly—or anyway more nearly than a jury—on an equality with him. Before them a defendant will be assured, it is claimed, of a fair, unbiased hearing.

But there will be no more extraordinary tribunals or "star chamber" courts where one man is judge and prosecuting attorney simultaneously, and where defendants may employ no counsel, summon no witnesses, or do anything in their own

defense save to try and rally their exhausted, terrified brains to meet the hail of pitiless questions and accusations.

Henceforth, the procedure of the Russian courts will be a sort of combination of the French and American systems. As in France, an investigating magistrate—*judge d'instruction*—will make a preliminary examination to decide whether the accused shall be freed or tried—that is, whether there is a case against him or not. If he decides there is, the defendant will then be brought before a court where a state procurator—corresponding roughly to a district attorney—will present the case against him. He will be allowed counsel for his defense or may defend himself. The chief difference will be the above-mentioned substitution of lay judges for a jury.

Meanwhile, what hitherto has been Vee-Cheka will be a detective force—called the “Gay Pay Oo”—no longer independent but under the control and orders of the Ministry of the Interior. Of course military offenses, etc., will be judged by courts-martial and in exceptional cases exceptional rights will be given to the detectives of search, arrest, and so forth. But beyond that, a measure of civil rights and freedom not greatly different from those enjoyed in America, France, or England is promised to Russians and foreigners alike, and I venture to say that no one who behaves himself has any more to fear from the “Gay Pay Oo” than the average American citizen has from the Department of Justice.

## LENIN'S DEATH

Moscow, *September 1, 1922.*—"Lenin may go south for a change of air before resuming work in Moscow. He is now practically all right again, taking an active interest in affairs and receiving numerous visitors, among others Yenukidze, secretary of the Central Executive Committee."

This was the announcement made to me today on the fourth anniversary of the attempted murder of Lenin by a girl, Fanny—not Dora, as is generally stated—Kaplan. The communist workman Ivanov, an eyewitness of the affair, who pursued and captured the girl, gives a vivid picture of the events of the tragic evening which started the historic "Red terror."

"Lenin had been speaking," he says, "at a party meeting in the Michelson factory. Beside the huge granite building there is a court before which Lenin's automobile was waiting. I was standing in the court with a number of comrades when Lenin appeared at the door. A woman stepped forward to speak with him. She was a nurse from a neighboring hospital and asked why two poods of flour had been requisitioned from the hospital, begging him to have it restored.

"Suddenly in the dim light I saw a girl's figure spring from behind a stone buttress in the corner; her hand was raised and instantly a pistol banged three times. The nurse was unhurt, but Lenin leaned backward into the arms of friends. Amid the confusion everyone was shouting, some dashing to cover, others pouring from the doors.

"The girl assassin dropped the weapon and slipped through a gateway. I followed with Comrade Uvarov. We saw her run-

ning toward the street car station at the corner, but before she had gone 100 feet we got her.

"The crowd tried to tear her away and lynch her, but we fought them off. Then the police came to help us and took her."

A workers' newspaper, the *Workman's Gazette*, today publishes a copy of the proclamation issued on the following morning by Karl Peters, then the head of the Vee-Cheka. The document that marked the beginning of the "terror" is simple, almost insignificant. After stating boldly that there had been an attempt on Lenin's life the previous evening, it continues:

"The assassin, Fanny Kaplan, has admitted that she is a member of the right wing of the Social Revolutionary party group Chernov. She refuses"—one can imagine what a desperate resolve that refusal implied—"all information regarding accomplices in the plot. In 1907 she was an anarchist, became involved in trouble in Kiev and passed some time in a Tsarist prison. Later she came to Moscow and became connected with the Social Revolutionaries. She admits that she is a partisan of the Constituent Assembly and that she approves the appeal for English and French aid against the Soviet regime. Investigations are proceeding."

In an adjoining column the *Workman's Gazette* states that the bullet was extracted from the mastoid muscle by Professor Bokratog on April 23 of the present year. He made two parallel incisions an inch and a quarter long on the sides of an abscess formed in the hollow of Lenin's neck adjoining the shoulder. He opened the abscess and found the bullet beneath it. Then he put two silk stitches in each incision.

The patient bore the operation well.

Moscow, *October 15, 1922*.—"Lenin is not only right back on the job, but is as fit as a fiddle. I watched him for the best part of an hour today, and if he is a sick man, I never saw a well

one," said Oscar Cesare, the American artist, who managed to gain admittance to Lenin's office in the Kremlin, a privilege rigidly denied to "interviewers."

Cesare was admitted to make sketches of the Soviet leader for the Sunday magazine of the *New York Times* on condition that he would not interrupt Lenin's work.

Telling of his interesting experience, Cesare said:

"And you never saw anyone working with such gusto. It made me think of the way a man who has been denied his favorite dish by a doctor for a long time, and then when at last he is allowed to eat it goes right ahead as if he hadn't tasted food for a year."

Admission to Lenin's office, once permission had been obtained, was easy enough, but the way was securely guarded. First the visitor must pass the military control at the Troitsky gate of the Kremlin, connected with the palace by a long bridge over the park. Beneath a tower at the far end is a second post. At the entrance to the building to the right of a big square, where Lenin's apartment is situated, one's pass must again be shown to the sentries. Generally there are a couple of guards on the second floor landing outside the apartment itself.

Cesare was kept waiting only a few minutes in the great anteroom with its long council tables and two girl secretaries, before Lenin's personal secretary, whose name is Fotyeva, announced that he could enter a simple little room overlooking a courtyard where the man who holds Russia in a firmer grip than any Tsar since Peter the Great was sitting hunched in a chair before a flat-topped desk covered with books and papers.

Lenin rose and greeted his visitor with a strong handshake. His figure looked stocky and strong and, though his hair is more gray than the red in his bristly mustache and small chin beard, his eyes were clear and bright, his face full of healthy color. The room was lined with a restful blue paper, harmonizing with a thick blue carpet. A felt door closed softly on well-oiled



hinges, shutting Cesare into a quiet chamber in which there were no ornaments or pictures on the walls save two prints or photographs, apparently of some meeting.

Behind Lenin was an open fireplace without any fire. On the desk in front of him there was the usual Swedish box telephone that is common in Russia, but with an automatic calling apparatus affixed, and a small signal lamp instead of calling bells.

"Lenin stepped close up to me, smiling in a wonderfully attractive way," said Cesare.

"'Sit where you please and make yourself comfortable,' he said. 'You'll excuse me if I go on working—will it matter if I don't pose for you?'"

"'Not in the least,' I answered, 'just go ahead as if I wasn't here—they said I could stay for ten minutes.'"

"'Ten, twenty, just as you like,' said Lenin. (In point of fact I stayed forty-five and then went of my own accord.) 'Well, then I'll go right on.'"

"For a time he sat hunched up in a chair reading a Russian newspaper intently as if he would burn a hole in it. From start to finish he seemed utterly unconscious of my presence and absorbed in his work. Of course that is not literally true. After a short while he dropped his newspaper and pressed a buzzer for his secretary. He asked her to bring some documents. While waiting he smiled at me and asked how I found Moscow. I replied I had been much struck by the order of the city, the cheerful faces of the people, and the busy work of painting and repairing everywhere.

"'Been here long?' he asked.

"'Two months,' I replied.

"'Two months, eh? That's good. And you got a good impression? That's fine.'"

"I took advantage of the opportunity to say how interested in him people in America were, adding: 'You are as well known

there as President Harding. Even those who don't agree with you admit you are a big man.'

"Lenin again smiled the genuine attractive smile. 'I am not a big man,' he said, tapping himself on the breast. 'I'm only a little man,' and again he stepped toward me with an indescribably friendly air.

"At that moment he reminded me immensely of Theodore Roosevelt—the same magnetism, the same almost childish frankness and friendliness. He seemed much simpler than Lloyd George. When I sketched the latter at Genoa he spoke cleverly and epigrammatically, as if wishing to make an impression. There is none of that with Lenin. On the other hand, he is not cold like Poincaré. Poincaré struck me as being a man who thought everything out at night carefully and logically. Lenin seemed intensely human and alive. Though his English isn't absolutely perfect, he was so on the *qui vive* for what I said that he appeared to catch the sense of the words before they were hardly out of my mouth.

"His secretary brought in some papers and at once I ceased to exist for Lenin. He studied the typewritten pages profoundly, then murmured the names of some of his principal subordinates. Still muttering, he seized a telephone book and ran through its pages, repeating the number as if I were a thousand miles away. He pressed the figures on the automatic dial and got the connection. In all his actions there was nothing nervous, but swift conservation of movement and energy that reminded me of films I had seen to teach avoidance of waste motion at machines.

"While telephoning, Lenin gave the effect of entire absorption—he was actually speaking face to face with the subordinate, and gestured naturally and instinctively with his free hand.

"Finally I told him I had got enough sketches and added I would make lithographs for reproduction to be sold in America for the benefit of starving Russian children. For an instant

Lenin didn't catch the words and I explained. 'Good,' he said, 'good, I understand.' I murmured something about political opinion in America. 'Yes,' he replied, 'I've just been reading this,' and he held up a red-bound copy of Pettygrew's *Plutocrat Democracy*. 'It's a very fine book,' and his eyes sparkled as he looked down at it. I got the impression that Lenin didn't admire the American political system as much as he admired the book."

Moscow, *January 23, 1924*.—Premier Lenin died last night at 6:50 o'clock. The immediate cause of death was paralysis of the respiratory centers due to a cerebral hemorrhage.

For some time optimistic reports have been current as the effects of a previous lesion gradually cleared up, but Lenin's nearest friends, realizing the progress of the relentless malady, tried vainly to hope against hope.

At 11:20 o'clock this morning President Kalinin briefly opened the session of the All-Russian Soviet Congress and requested everyone to stand. He had not slept all night and tears were streaming down his haggard face. A sudden wave of emotion—not a sound, but a strange stir—passed over the audience, none of whom knew what had happened. The music started to play the Soviet funeral march, but was instantly hushed as Kalinin murmured brokenly:

"I bring you terrible news about our dear comrade, Vladimir Ilyich." (N. Lenin was his pen name.)

High up in the gallery a woman uttered a low, wailing cry that was followed by a burst of sobs.

"Yesterday," faltered Kalinin, "yesterday, he suffered a further stroke of paralysis and—" There was a long pause as if the speaker were unable to nerve himself to pronounce the fatal word; then, with an effort which shook his whole body, it came—"died."

The emotional Slav temperament reacted immediately. From

all over the huge opera house came sobs and wailing, not loud or shrill, but pitifully mournful, spreading and increasing. Kalinin could not speak. He tried vainly to motion for silence with his hands and for one appalling moment a dreadful outbreak of mass hysteria seemed certain. A tenth of a second later it could not have been averted, but Yenukidze, Secretary of the Russian Federal Union, thrust forward his powerful frame and with hand and voice demanded calm. Then Kalinin, stumbling, read out the official bulletin.

"Jan. 21 the condition of Vladimir Ilyich suddenly underwent sharp aggravation. At 5:30 p.m. his breathing was interrupted and he lost consciousness. At 6:50 Vladimir Ilyich died from paralysis of the respiratory centers.

"Dated 3:25 a.m., January 22. Signed: Drs. Obukh (Lenin's personal physician and chief of the Moscow Health Department), Semashko (a close personal friend of Lenin, and Minister of the Health Department), Osipov, Abrikosov, Deshin, Bunak, Getye, Elistratov, Rozakov, Veisbrod."

"We propose," continued Kalinin, "that the twenty-first day of January henceforth be set aside as a day of national mourning." By a tragic coincidence today—January 9, old style, is a similar Bolshevik holiday in memory of Father Gapon's petitioners, massacred by the Tsar's troops in the courtyard of the Winter Palace on "Bloody Sunday," 1905.

"Do you agree?" questioned Kalinin.

A confused sound, half sob, half sigh, was the only assent.

Kalinin tried to tell the funeral arrangements, but broke down completely.

Kamenev and Zinoviev, equally unnerved, and other members of the presiding committee had laid their heads on the table and cried like children. Even the daredevil Cossack leader Budyenny was weeping unrestrainedly, while the delegates in the body of the theater stood motionless, sobbing, with tears coursing down their cheeks.

Finally Lashevich, a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist party and president of the Siberian Revolutionary Committee, stepped to the speakers' rostrum. His strong, square body, in khaki uniform with dull red facings, radiated calm as in a firm voice he announced that the members of the presiding committee and a group of senior delegates to the congress would go tomorrow at 6 a.m. by special train to the village of Gorky, twenty-eight versts from Moscow, where Lenin died, to bring back the body by train, reaching Moscow at one o'clock, and the delegation would escort it to the "House of Columns"—the former Nobles' Club in the center of the city—where it would lie in state until the funeral on Saturday in order that the population might "freely and without restriction" be permitted to pay their respects to the dead leader.

So great was the continued emotion that no one on the presiding committee thought to give the order finally to play the Soviet funeral march until reminded from the audience.

Owing to a partial breakdown of wires, the result of a recent abnormal snowfall, it appears that the news of Lenin's fatal seizure did not reach Moscow until shortly after eight o'clock last night. Lenin's wife, Nadyezhda Konstantinova Krupskaya, was with him at the end. Kalinin and other leaders left for Gorky about nine o'clock, but the news was not known even in the government offices until late at night.

The news of Lenin's death only became known to the general public by special fly-sheet editions that appeared on the street at six o'clock. It was snowing heavily and as usual on a Moscow holiday in winter there were comparatively few people about. The flags decorating the public buildings are hung out from the façade rather than hoisted on the mast above, so that only the half-masted red banner over the clock tower of the Kremlin and the flags on the foreign missions gave the sign of mourning.

Curiously enough the newsboys did not shout the tidings, but

each speedily became the center of a group asking, "What is the news? Is it a telegram from abroad, or what?" At the first glimpse of the black-bordered sheet someone cried, "Trotsky is dead!" That it seems was the impression even of several members of the presiding committee of the Soviet Congress last night when a few leaders left hurriedly in obvious perturbation, so little did anyone expect the sudden end of Lenin.

As the news became known it produced literal stupefaction. The correspondent watched dozens of people seize the sheet and stare blankly at the huge headline. A spell of silent dismay that overspread one group after another was perhaps the most remarkable tribute to the dead leader, for these were not communists or workers, but people of all sorts, poor and prosperous alike. The correspondent heard a well-dressed man say dazedly to a tattered beggar:

"Lenin is dead."

"Didn't you know that?" was the reply with an extraordinary mingling of scorn and pride. "All the city knows it—I knew it this morning."

The house where Lenin died has a tragic history. It is a broad, low mansion with columns, in the Italian style, in the center. It was bought a score of years ago by Sava Morosov, self-made billionaire chief of the Russian textile trust. Morosov had liberal ideas, and after a bitter dispute in 1905 with his brothers, who opposed his plan for extended profit sharing with his employees, killed himself. The house stands in the center of a wooded hilly park through which winds a mile and a half drive from the hamlet of Gorky—the first village in Russia, thanks to Lenin, to obtain electrification.

Lenin will be buried in the Kremlin wall in the Red Square where lie John Reed, Sverdlov, first President of the Soviet Republic, and other well-known figures of the Bolshevik revolution.

Interesting sidelights on Lenin's character have been given

to me by a young woman who worked for him as stenographer. In the dark days of 1918 when Soviet Russia was beleaguered on all sides by enemies Lenin received the news that Trotsky had defeated the Czechoslovaks at Sviask, near Kazan, on the Volga. Lenin, she said, danced with glee like a child.

The first time she spoke with him was a little earlier when during an important meeting he noticed she kept looking up from her work to watch the man of whom she had heard so much but had never seen before. After the meeting Lenin came to her desk.

"Little Comrade," he said, smiling, "here I am. We must shake hands because we are going to work together."

Moscow, *January 24, 1924.*—Two unforgettable pictures stand out from this day of Russia's sorrow. First, Lenin lying in state—such simple state amid such grandeur—in the columned hall of the former Nobles' Club; second, the face and shoulders of Kalinin helping to bear Lenin's coffin from the station, when two steps down from the platform its weight was suddenly thrown on him in front.

Kalinin was a typical Russian peasant driven by misery like millions of his fellows to work whole or part time in a city factory. During these moments of strain he symbolized the struggle of Russia's 140,000,000 peasants against the blind enmity of nature and human oppression. For two nights he had not slept and, as the level ground relieved part of the burden, he staggered from sheer exhaustion. But on he went like an old peasant plowing the stubborn earth, with sweat pouring down his cheeks in an icy snow-flecked gale, until he reached a gun caisson with six white horses waiting in the station yard to carry the coffin to the Nobles' Club.

Back to the Kremlin barracks these gunners drove disconsolate, for Lenin's friends—members of the various central

executive committees—insisted that they and only they should bear the glass-covered coffin through the five miles of snow-bound streets at the head of the gigantic procession. Every half-mile or so the cortège halted to change coffin bearers. Both sides of the route were lined with troops shoulder to shoulder and above them every house was crowded—windows, balconies, and roofs—with a black swarm of spectators with bared heads beneath black-edged red flags that fluttered wildly in the storm.

At intervals swelled mournful music, and we in the procession, marching slowly with linked arms twenty deep across the street—I had on the left a Red Army man and on the right a reporter of *Pravda*—fell into slow, cadenced step. At last across the central square of the Grand Opera House we came to the “House of Columns,” where the coffin was carried within.

It was three o'clock, and during an interminable wait in the bitter cold we perceived that only the first two or three hundred members of the procession had come thus far, the rest having been deflected another way from the Opera House Square. We waited, shivering, and gradually one after another drifted away until barely a hundred were left in a ring thirty yards in diameter now formed by cadets of the Military Academy shoulder to shoulder.

“Form in line,” came an order. “Only members of the Central Executive Committee”—the majority of whom had already been appointed the guard of honor beside Lenin's body—“and the Association of Old Bolsheviki and Society of Former Political Prisoners may enter.”

I joined the line and waited and they let me pass.

What a contrast it was. Outside in the freezing dusk was the ring of cadets dancing to a slow lugubrious chant to keep their feet warm around the decreasing group at the door. Within the marble hall and on the great marble staircase were warmth and a blaze of electric light. At the head of the staircase was a



narrow red carpet between lines of soldiers with fixed bayonets five feet apart and motionless as stone.

We advanced thirty yards down a broad corridor, then turned sharply to the left to the entrance of the former banqueting hall of the Nobles' Club, where Lenin lay. Before me tottered an old, old communist, hair and beard as white as snow. Behind me was an ex-political convict with lined, weatherbeaten face, holding tightly the hand of his little son, whose big head was clean-shaven. A few steps more and we were in the white, many-columned hall where Lenin lay.

Four separate impressions struck me—the blaze of the electric light in the whiteness of the hall, an overpowering smell of sepulchral lilies, green fir branches against the white walls (the engine of the train that brought the body from Gorky also being decorated with green fir branches), and utter silence.

In the center of the room Lenin lay on a high couch with four columns that gave the effect of a sort of old-fashioned four-poster bed without curtains. Over his feet was a gray rug with something stenciled on it, over his body a dark red blanket; and his head rested bare on a white pillow. The face was a yellow-white, like wax, without the slightest wrinkle and utterly calm. The eyes were closed, yet the expression was of one looking forward seeking something beyond his vision.

At each corner of the couch stood members of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist party and of the Council of Commissars who will replace each other at intervals of ten minutes day and night for the next seventy hours.

Never have I seen men so completely still. Not a muscle in their eyelids flickered, and they hardly seemed to breathe. They wore ordinary dress, as simple as the couch itself, while round them passed slow-footed mourners, who will continue to pass for seventy hours between the lines of khaki-clad soldiers.

The Petrograd Soviet has suggested that Petrograd be renamed Leningrad in honor of the Soviet leader.

A mile and a half of people were waiting tonight six deep in Moscow streets with the temperature 10 degrees below zero to pay their last respects to Lenin. From all over Russia special trains are hurrying tens upon tens of thousands more to the capital. As I write, the echo of revolutionary hymns which this waiting multitude is singing comes through the whirling snow-storm to my windows. So they will pass all night and day for the next seventy hours, through the many-columned hall where Lenin's body lies.

Yesterday peasants from the village of Gorky, where Lenin died, and employees of the state farm that was formerly the property of the millionaire Morosov passed—men, women, and children—through the big reception room where the body lay amid many flowers and green fir wreaths. Children cried loudly. At the recent Christmas this "Bolshevik atheist" arranged a party with a Christmas tree and gifts and hobbled about among them, sharing their simple happiness. On the morning of his death he went out on a shooting party with Bukharin and some workers on the estate, sitting in a sleigh but taking a keen interest in the sport. He seemed tired by the outing and the doctors recommended that he go to bed, but he ate a hearty meal about three o'clock and appeared quite well. Suddenly, two and a half hours later, the blow fell. He had talked at the meal about the morning's sport, especially of one young hound which was nervous and untrained but showed remarkable aptitude.

"She is all right," said Lenin, "if you give her time and do not hustle her too much. She is young and stupid still and over-eager, but she will learn if you give her time."

These were practically his last words, and the suggestion is made that it might have been of the new Russia that he was speaking. He dozed for a time, and his wife sat in the room. Suddenly she noticed that Lenin was breathing with difficulty, and hastily summoned the resident physicians. They at once

saw that he was in a state of coma and from that time to the end he gave no sign of life save spasmodic coughing gasps to draw his breath.

His wife, his sisters, Maria and Anna, and his comrade Bukharin were with him when he died.

Today the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Communist party, the Communist International, and other organizations issued brief manifestoes, which may be summed up in the words written in white letters on a huge black banner outside the House of Columns, where Lenin's body lies: "The death of Lenin, our leader, must be answered with unity and iron discipline."

Moscow, *January 25, 1924.*—Today has shown what a hold Lenin had over the imagination of the Russian people. I do not speak of his personal friends and the Communist party organizations whose tributes fill pages of the newspapers, among them being a short telegram from Trotsky, lying ill in Tiflis, but of the common people, the majority of whom never even saw Lenin, to whom one might have thought he was only a name that symbolized the terrible destructive force of the revolution, the uptearing of the roots of life.

For the past thirty hours a human river, shorter in the grim darkness of the early morning when the north wind made the icy air wellnigh intolerable, but lengthening again to three, four, and five miles this evening when the day's work was over, has flowed through the House of Columns.

The people come in two sections now, the first—workers' organizations, factories, schools, orphanages, and soldiers—from the Theater Square on the left; the second in long queues eight deep stretching miles along "Hunter's Row," past the university and Kremlin gate, on past the great gold-domed cathedral Alexander built to commemorate the victory over Napoleon,

to the outskirts of the city where the river curves northward around Moscow.

In the side streets there are other queues also, and at regular intervals the main stream is halted while these tributaries to it, both sections, from right to left, enter separate doors and unite on the marble staircase leading up to the columned hall where Lenin lies. They pass through three deep now instead of in single file as yesterday, and it is estimated that from 10,000 to 12,000 see the dead leader every hour, which will make the full count not so far short of a million by Saturday if the stream keeps up.

There is no formal salutation to the dead man who lies so still between his four watchers. The men bare their heads and the river flows on silently, save for the slow murmuring shuffle of never-ceasing feet. But from time to time a hidden orchestra plays low plaintive music.

This morning I watched a group of children, aged six to eleven, pass through the Hall of Columns. Each triad of little ones had an elder child or teacher with them, all four hand in hand. With wide, astonished eyes they stared at the couch where Lenin lay. As rank after rank moved across the room past the body, their heads turned to the right as though held by an irresistible attraction. On the farther side of the hall the red carpet turned sharply at right angles leading to the exit.

Each rank of the children, and many elder folks, too, went on straight ahead as though hypnotized and would have marched blindly into the wall had not the teachers been there to guide them round the corner. As it was, a guard at the corner was forced to intervene again and again, so lost were the people in their first and final contemplation of Lenin.

The effect on the children and the simpler section of the public was extraordinary—a sort of veritable hypnosis that lasted two or three minutes after they reached the street again. The sudden bright lights in the hall, the dazzling white walls, and

the heady perfume of flowers doubtless were responsible in no small degree, but there was something more—mass suggestion or crowd psychology perhaps.

Most of all the children seemed struck by the utter stillness of the figure on the couch and the watchers beside it.

"Was it really Lenin," asked one little girl, "or was it only an image of him?"

"Of course it was he," said an older friend, "but he could not move, he is dead."

"But the others standing by his bed did not move either," persisted the little one. "Were they dead, too?"

Strangely enough none of them seemed frightened. One small boy was weeping bitterly, and I asked him if he had been afraid. He shook his head.

"No," he gulped at last. "I'm sorry for poor Lenin—he looked so lonely there in the middle of the great big room with people passing around."

Moscow, *January 26, 1924.*—To a Western country, such details as the publication of the extraordinarily minute report of the autopsy may seem rather horrible, but the Russians have a different outlook, and the fact is, the dead leader was the object of such interest that the public wants to know everything. How else can one explain two cases that came to my notice to-day? The first was my own housemaid, a girl about twenty, the daughter of a small real-estate agent ruined by the revolution, who stood in line from midnight until five o'clock this morning to pay her last respects to a man she had never seen and who had altered her whole life for the worse. She hardly knew why she went. She just repeated:

"Lenin was the greatest man in the world and wished everyone to be free, happy, and peaceful—I must see him."

I walked down with her to the Theater Square, a huge open

space swept by a north wind from straight across the snow-bound steppes of the Arctic ocean. The temperature was 18 below zero, yet there was in the immense concourse tens upon tens of thousands of men, women, even young children, waiting with the unfathomable patience of the Slav. They were arranged not in direct queues, but in sinuous lines winding across the square, and every now and then a wave of mournful singing arose, punctuated at intervals by the dull explosions from Red Square.

The second case was that of a middle-aged peasant, with a long white beard and shaggy mustache congealed by his frozen breath. Beside him were his wife and two small boys. They had tramped in from a village twenty versts north of Moscow.

He had never seen Lenin. He was not so happy now as before the revolution. They had taken four of his five cows in 1918 and some land his father bought. But Lenin was a good friend of the peasants, he said. He was a Russian man like himself, not a foreign Tsar, and he had to bid him godspeed.

"And my wife and children wanted to come too," he said. "So we set off this morning before it was light and walked all day."

I asked the housemaid today whether there were many still waiting when she left.

"Thousands and thousands," was the answer, "almost as many as when we first reached the square."

One of the first notable effects of Premier Lenin's death has been a flood of applications, from the principal urban centers, Moscow, Petrograd, Kharkov, Kiev, Odessa, and Siberian cities, from groups of workers to be allowed to enter the Communist party. This will doubtless be permitted in many cases. It is even reported that the party membership will likely be increased from below 400,000 to upward of 750,000. It is already certain that the sorrow of Lenin's loss will be utilized as the

foundation of a revival campaign to infuse new energy, enthusiasm, unity, and discipline in the Communist party.

Moscow, *January 27, 1924*.—Throughout Russia tomorrow at 4 p.m. there will be a funeral salute of guns, sirens, steam whistles, and music, the echo of the cannon of the Kremlin paying the last tribute to Lenin. Then for five minutes movement will cease in every department of national life while the dead leader's body is being placed in the mausoleum.

All today and all last night crowds flowed toward the House of Columns in, it seemed, greater volume than before. The doors were to be shut at noon today, but before the eagerness of the multitude twelve hours more were conceded until midnight. All this in the grip of the bitterest cold—28 below zero Fahrenheit. One wonders how they stand it.

Last night even the ponies of the guards outside the House of Columns were white from head to tail with congealed perspiration as they halted for a few minutes to rest. The soldiers stamped and waved arms around big log fires, but the long black lines of people crept forward regardless, with scarcely a sign of life save singing at intervals.

It has been said the Unknown Soldier is already becoming the focus of the militarist cult in France. What is happening here emphasizes the religious aspect of Bolshevism with Lenin as the central figure. How else can one explain the gigantic mass movement to see his body—a movement not of communists and their sympathizers alone, but of the rest of the population despite such agony of cold. The Bolsheviks can organize much, but it is not their propaganda which draws these hundreds of thousands to Lenin's feet.

In the published declarations of the communist leaders there is further proof of this deification. Always during the recent Communist party controversy, the speakers on behalf of the

central organization showed a tendency to employ the words of Lenin as an argument unanswerable. Today there is a series of articles by department chiefs in almost all of which underlies the note:

"This and this we did by Lenin's wish. You cannot question it, for so he willed."

Moscow, *January 28, 1924*.—The climax of an amazing week of national emotion was reached at four o'clock today under the ancient wall of the Kremlin, where, as bells tolled and guns thundered, Stalin, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin, Rykov, and Kalinin bore Lenin's red-draped coffin from the high dais where it had lain all the afternoon to the marble mausoleum, still covered by a wooden construction shed, under the shadow of a huge plaster statue of a workman.

This statue the Bolsheviki set up as a pendant to the bronze effigy on the opposite side of the square of the blacksmith Mirin, who helped to free Russia from Polish domination hundreds of years ago.

Massed bands played the "Internationale" to slow time, and from a vast multitude in the Red Square rose in the icy air a fog of congealed breath, like a smoke sacrifice. So cold it was—35 degrees below zero Fahrenheit—that beards, hats, collars, and eyebrows were white like the snowclad trees in the little park close to the Kremlin wall where nearly 3000 communists now lie buried. Few dared take off their hats as Lenin's body passed to its last resting place. The majority stood at salute with raised hands.

In the streets leading to the square tens of thousands more, lined up under mourning banners, were awaiting admission. At the corners soldiers built log fires, round which each squad, relieved hourly owing to the intense cold, stamped and beat their arms against their bodies.



The most striking feature of the last moment was its utter absence of ceremony. Lenin's disciples took the master's body and laid it in its appointed place. No word was said.

The real obsequies had taken place in the Hall of Columns, where, at eight o'clock in the morning, the foreign diplomats and members of the highest Soviet organizations joined in the columned hall members of Lenin's family and a little group of closest friends that had been watching the body since midnight when the doors were closed to the public. The guard of honor, four strong, beside the body was doubled in the final hours to permit all the hundreds who claimed the privilege to take a turn, and the shifts were of five minutes instead of ten.

Amid utter silence the combined orchestras of the Grand Opera House and Conservatory of Music played Chopin's "Requiem" and selections from Wagner, followed by the Bolshevik funeral march.

Even in the halls it was bitterly cold, and the majority of those present retained their coats and high felt boots.

The huge pile of wreaths that last night almost hid the form in the center had been cleared away, and there passed over the hall an almost physical manifestation of death's majesty. The Russians present sang the moving words of the funeral march and the "Internationale," which ended the ceremony.

Then the hall was cleared of all except the members of the family and the guard of honor, and Stalin, Zinoviev, two workers, and two peasants raised the coffin, now closed and enveloped in a red cloth, for the final stage of the long pilgrimage. Through gray lines of troops, like pictures of medieval Russian knights, in peaked helmets coming low over their shoulders, the coffin was carried, with changes of bearers every fifty yards—still in the same proportion of two Soviet leaders to four of their humblest comrades—to the Red Square, where the whole garrison of Moscow was standing at attention.

When the coffin was placed on the dais, Yevdokimov, a mem-

ber of the Petrograd Communist party, chosen because of his reputed loudest voice in Russia, read as an oration the declaration of the Federal Soviet Congress addressed to "laboring humanity."

"We are burying Lenin. The genius of the workers' revolution has gone from us. His great sagacity and will to do are dead. Hundreds of millions of workers, peasants, and colonial slaves mourn the death of the potent leader. Laboring Russia, which he united and led in the victorious struggle and conducted through all dangers, is crowding in hundreds of thousands to his final resting place.

"From the whole world swells a wave of lamentation, mourning, and sorrow. His enemies, against whom he waged the struggle of a flaming revolutionary, unwillingly lower their flags. All realize that the bright star of humanity is eclipsed. From his grave Lenin stands before the world in all his gigantic stature. On the boundary of a new epoch he will stand for centuries a grandiose figure. For Lenin was, and will remain even after his physical death, the lord of a new humanity, its herald, prophet, and creator. From century to century persists the cause of human attempts to win freedom from persecution, slavery, and oppression.

"For the first time in world history suppressed classes came forth into the arena of struggle and conquered. They were the first to armor their victory in the steel mail of the proletarian dictatorship. They were the first proletariat of the cities, poor peasants, and downtrodden slaves of the old imperial colonies to seize for themselves mastery of the new life and direction of their own historical destiny. For the first time in human history these laboring masses realize their own sufficient strength.

"Lenin is dead. But Lenin lives in millions of hearts, lives in the great union of workers, peasants, proletariat, and oppressed nations; lives in the collective intelligence of the Communist party; lives in the workers' dictatorship which he

erected, solid and menacing, on the boundary of Europe and Asia.

"The Old World is dying. Ruined, mangled, and disfigured lies Europe, the hoary mother of capitalist civilization. For centuries European capital labored, achieving with the hands of her workers marvels of technique, while enslaving millions and establishing an iron yoke upon the necks of both hemispheres of the globe. For centuries she strengthened her empire of cruelty and oppression, blood, slavery, and terror.

"But, caught in her own net, turning skill and technique to the service of scientific self-destruction, she produced the first gigantic fissure in her own edifice in the World War. The diabolical machine of capital, shaken and tottering already, is about to fall to pieces. But today capital in Europe is still holding out, and only one force, a gigantic liberator, victorious, can save the whole world. That force is the laboring mass—whose energy and class-consciousness guide and unite hundreds of millions of men.

"The leader of this mass humanity was our comrade Lenin. He held the key to the spirit of all workers and peasants. Penetrating the heart depths of the human strata he aroused their consciousness, their class instinct, and set on their road the most downtrodden and oppressed. Before the mighty ones of this world he flung the simple and madly daring slogan, 'All power to the Soviets,' and the miracle was performed.

"The league of our governments grows in strength. The people, workers and peasants, men and women, are stirred in their depths toward the new life. All the more avidly, the more resolutely, are they seizing upon governmental power and step by step abolishing old, decrepit, worthless things. After the bloody struggle our country stands firm on its feet, and the kingdom of the workers and peasants grows.

"We have lost in Lenin the lovely captain of our vessel. That loss is irreplaceable because in all the world there never was

such intelligence, such mighty effort, such inflexible will as that of Lenin, who led our government through its worst dangers.

"Henceforth his work is set on the right road. Hundreds of thousands of disciples of Vladimir Ilyich firmly uphold his mighty banner. Already it is transfiguring the whole world. Proletariat of all lands, unite!

"Comrades and brothers, raise higher our red flag. Know no hesitation in the struggle for liberty. The proletariat never can lose. Proletariat of all lands, unite!"

Another note of today's ceremony hardly less striking than its simplicity was the absence of Trotsky. For the last three days there had been a report that he was returning from the Caucasus where he was ill. More than once crowds assembled to greet him at the station, and official photographers were sent to wait chilly hours before the House of Columns to film his entry. To the last many believed he would come. A dozen times came a cry from the throng around the mausoleum, "There's Trotsky," or "Trotsky's here," as anyone in a military greatcoat faintly resembling Trotsky passed before us.

Stalin's bitter attack on Trotsky published the very day of Lenin's death brought Trotsky far more sympathy than blame. The best-informed people here are confident that Trotsky, Radek, and other insurgents will join hands with the "machine" leaders, Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Bukharin, over Lenin's grave. If Trotsky gives no sign to the latter, they may make the first step toward reconciliation.

Moscow, *January 31, 1924*.—The outstanding figure of the past week is Krupskaya, Lenin's wife. Looking back over this landmark period in the history of New Russia one sees a simple, motherly woman in her shabby black clothes gradually coming nearer and nearer to the center of the picture of Lenin's mourning comrades, until she ends by dominating it entirely. Not be-

cause that is her place by right as Lenin's widow, but from some intrinsic quality in herself.

Physically, she has been wonderful; spiritually, more wonderful still. A week ago today, after two nights of sleepless sorrow, this woman of fifty trudged four miles through the snow behind Lenin's body from the Gorky mansion to the station and then four and a half miles more through Moscow streets swept by a bitter north wind to the House of Columns. Late that afternoon one of my friends saw her pacing up and down the corridor leading to the columned hall, where Lenin lay in state, engaged in deep conversation with the aged German revolutionary, Clara Zetkin. In that palace where the mass emotion of the whole nation reached such a pitch of intensity, Krupskaya, dry-eyed, was quietly discussing woman's part in the German revolutionary movement.

On Saturday at the opening session of the Russian Federal Soviet Congress she made a speech that drew new tears from eyes that had wept floods already. Under its stimulus Bukharin wrote in less than half an hour the declaration the congress adopted unanimously an hour later and which was the only public pronouncement during Lenin's funeral ceremony the following day.

Today, in reply to innumerable messages of condolence, she writes:

"Let not your deep, abounding grief be expressed in outward honors for Lenin's personality. Monuments to his name and sumptuous ceremonies—all that in his life he valued so little, found them all so tiresome. Remember how much poverty and lack of order yet exist in our country. If you want to honor Lenin's name, build crèches, children's homes, schools, libraries, hospitals, sanatoria, and above all try so to act that by you his will be done."

Moscow, *March 15, 1923*.—Interesting reminiscences about Lenin are published in today's *Pravda* by his old friends Osinsky and Semashko.

Cycling, says Semashko, to which Lenin was devoted while in exile, nearly caused his death one evening in 1907 or 1908 in a small town near Geneva. An automobile driven by a too festive party suddenly charged right at Lenin in a narrow street. The future master of Russia kept his head and flung himself from his machine to the sidewalk. The bicycle was smashed to fragments, but Lenin picked himself up none the worse.

The resourcefulness and rapid, courageous action which, Semashko declares, are among Lenin's chief characteristics, have changed the destiny of Russia. According to the Marxist doctrine, revolution is not made by man but by circumstances, yet one is permitted to doubt whether the Bolshevik revolution would have succeeded without Lenin.

Osinsky sums up Lenin's greatest achievement, the formation of the Russian Communist party into an effective revolutionary machine, in the following terms:

"Lenin thrust out from the party the element of phrasemaking. He did it in order that the revolutionary energy might not be dissipated in fine, romantic words, but be transmuted into action which he directed along definite lines."

There in a nutshell is the secret of Bolshevik success. While Kerensky talked and the Social Revolutionaries planned and the Mensheviks hesitated, Lenin acted and made his party act with him. Anyone who knows the Russians, who would rather talk than eat, drink, sleep, or work—especially work—can understand what an achievement that was. Peter the Great made them work, too, but by brute force and Lenin by the force of personality.

"That force," said Osinsky, "came from two qualities—first, the capacity to understand the real meaning of events; second, the ability to explain things to others."

In a previous dispatch I have emphasized the fact that the real secret of Lenin's "dictatorship" is precisely this judgment of events and intuition of policy. Osinsky adds:

"One of the marvelous things about Lenin was his faculty to gauge situations and opinions at a distance. Alone of the Bolshevik leaders he has remained since the revolution in Petrograd or Moscow. He never went to the provinces. Yet he knew what was happening in the provinces and what the provinces were thinking far better than his colleagues, who were constantly visiting them."

Semashko gives his explanation of this power. He writes: "Lenin is really one with the people at heart. He has always lived in extreme simplicity—one small room, an iron bed, and a work table. This simplicity is innate in him, not a demagogue trick or bourgeois hypocrisy. Later, as master of Russia, he was always annoyed by pomp and ceremony."

Semashko also gives a picture of Lenin as a man. You see him jumping from his bicycle to help Semashko's eleven-year-old girl up a steep hill near Paris—he is never so happy as in the company of children—and turning furiously on a friend, who said it would do a healthy child no harm to be tired, with the savage phrase, "Parents like you should not be allowed to have children at all."

At parties—he loved parties, of which he was always the center, says Semashko—Lenin was full of life and fun. He had the power of infecting others with his own spirit, whether he wished to inflame a great audience to passionate energy or enliven a little group of exiles with childish fun.

"Mr. Bitter (Gorky is Russian for bitter) has a sweet wife," he once cried at an anniversary party given by Gorky in Paris. The guests were exiled revolutionists, men of intelligence who had suffered much. Yet Semashko relates that they laughed until the tears came at Lenin's joke, not because it was so won-

derful but because Lenin was gay and they too must be gay despite themselves.

In the highest degree he is a dynamic personality, "like a steel bullet," Osinsky says, "with a terrific charge of powder behind it." He was full of vigor, too, in the old days before his strength was sapped by the wounds of the girl assassin, Fanny Kaplan.

"He was strong as steel, sturdy as a little oak tree," says Osinsky. "Why, that night with three bullets in his body he walked to his automobile and climbed three flights of stairs to his apartment."

Then from the fullness of his heart Osinsky concludes:

"There is no one like Lenin. It is his doing that the revolutionary movement is now of world importance. Our enemies are strong and clever, fortified by long mastery and all the resources of money and science. But they have no one like Lenin."

Moscow, *April 3, 1927*.—Among the many legends concerning the life and deeds of Nikolai Lenin already incorporated in the popular mythology of the Moslem inhabitants of the Soviet Union is one passing from mouth to mouth in Turkestan in the form of a song and summarized as follows by Leonid Soloviev, a Russian writer who specializes in collecting Lenin stories:

The World War was raging and thousands were being slain because the kings of the earth wanted to fill their treasuries and were forcing their subjects to go to the front and kill each other. The stench of the fallen and the noise of the conflict rose to high heaven and annoyed Allah himself, who concluded it was time to call together his most faithful followers and select one wise and strong enough to end all this misery.

In order to find the best man for the job, Allah set up a double test. His elected agent must be able to turn over a huge rock weighing sixty poods (about a ton) and to give the correct



answer to the following riddle: "Who is the strongest on earth, who is the happiest, and who is the weakest and most unhappy?"

There were many candidates for the glorious mandate, but none was able to turn over the rock, although they tried so hard that the stone soon bore traces of their fingers. Neither could anyone solve the riddle, despite the variety of answers, most of which made Allah the strongest and happiest and Satan the weakest and most unhappy. Finally, Allah noticed a man of slight figure but with a very high forehead looking intently at the big rock. Maybe this little fellow can do it, thought the Most High.

When the last candidate threw off his coat and stood revealed in all his physical weakness, Allah's heart sank. But what was his surprise to see the man walk away from the rock and return in a few minutes with several beams of wood. One of these he shoved under the big stone. Then another was placed under the free end of the first, and by means of this improvised lever the rock was easily turned over, revealing the poisonous serpent Ok-Ilen, whose tail, weighing 100 poods, had helped hold the stone down.

Then the little champion answered Allah's riddle as follows: "The strongest is the most intelligent, who wins everyone's love; the happiest is the most honorable, who gives happiness to many; the most unhappy and the weakest is the man beloved by nobody."

Allah saw how wonderful was the talent of this man. So he lifted him up into heaven, where he spent fifty days and fifty nights learning the wisdom of the Most High. Thus equipped, the successful candidate was named Lenin and so sent back to earth. Lenin strode over the earth and stopped the stream of blood. He brought happiness to humanity. Then he returned to rest in Allah's halls. He left the world pacified and happy. His name shall endure while the word "happiness" lives.

So runs the legend.

## II

### Stalinism



## RÉSUMÉ OF EVENTS FROM LENIN'S DEATH THROUGH 1928

Moscow, *December 31, 1928*.—The year 1928 has brought momentous internal changes to the Soviet Union. The first month of the year witnessed the exile of Leon Trotsky and other opposition leaders. The early spring and summer saw a recurrence of state pressure upon the peasants that in some cases was so vigorous as to compare with the "militant communism" period of 1918 to 1921. During the summer and early fall there was an interval of indecision, but November and December brought an unmistakable definition of agrarian policy.

Agrarian policy was, indeed, the center of discussion during the whole year, and its development made it possible for foreign observers to understand much that had hitherto been mysterious in the struggle between the Trotskyists and the Communist party majority.

To appreciate the significance of this long-drawn-out opposition struggle that for more than two years has occupied the attention of Russian Communist party leaders to a regrettable extent—for these were years of comparative prosperity when much precious time was lost—it is necessary to go back to the New Economic Policy instituted by Lenin in the summer of 1921.

Exhausted by the great war, the revolution, the civil war, and the Volga famine, the Russians, as Lenin saw, could no longer be driven by the Soviet state to the effort needed for reconstruction. He therefore appealed to one of the oldest human motives—the desire for individual gain—and supplemented the faltering state mechanism by the appetites of individual producers.

To Lenin the New Economic Policy was a delicate adjustment between the forces of communism and individualism, adopted, perhaps like the Brest-Litovsk peace three years before, unwillingly, but as "the breathing space" he knew was necessary for existence.

Lenin's supreme self-confidence reckoned on accommodating, for an indefinite period, incompatibilities between the semi-capitalist and the semi-communist systems—for that was what the New Economic Policy meant—existing side by side in the same country. In the beginning of 1924 Lenin died. Before his embalmed body was exposed in a glass case to the eyes of devout pilgrims—surely the strangest phenomenon of all these flaming years since August 1914—the conflict between the two opposing forces that his genius might have adjusted had begun.

Trotsky, despite his comparatively late adherence to the Bolshevik party, was probably the foremost theoretical Marxist in Russia. On more than one occasion he had already opposed measures taken by Lenin for practical reasons.

It may be remembered that during the summer of 1921, when the New Economic Policy was under discussion, there were frequent reports abroad of strife between Lenin and Trotsky that, although not reaching the violence attributed to it by eager scribes in Riga and other peripheral countries, nevertheless did indicate serious differences of opinion.

M. Trotsky, one may assume, never believed that the communist lion could lie down peacefully in Russia with the capitalist lamb. Lenin's opportunism decided that they must, and while he lived they did.

From the summer of 1924 to December 1925, M. Trotsky conducted a vigorous campaign for the suppression of the "kulak," that is, the capitalist influence in the villages—to correspond with a campaign begun before Lenin's death, in the winter of 1923, against "Nepman" elements in the towns.

He said that it was impossible really to check the urban

Nepman unless the rural Nepman was checked also. He said, too, that unless the Nepmen were checked communism might just as well be abandoned, that one of the two opposing forces must defeat the other. Perhaps both of M. Trotsky's contentions were correct, but two factors operated against him.

The first was the fact that the Communist party did not yet feel itself strong enough to fight both the urban and rural Nepmen simultaneously. Second, the personal rivalry between Trotsky and other Communist party leaders, notably Stalin, who as general secretary controlled the party organization.

The result was that the Communist Party Congress in December 1925 rejected M. Trotsky's proposals, and he was saved from expulsion from the party only by M. Stalin himself. During 1926 and 1927 M. Trotsky pressed the same points with his characteristic energy, supplemented now by the support of other prominent communists.

Following him, they, too, had come to realize that, although the urban Nepmen had been, relatively speaking, suppressed, no permanent victory over them was possible while the richer peasants and the private business elements in the villages remained strong. In 1927 there can be no doubt that personal rivalry between Messrs. Stalin and Trotsky also played a role.

Accession to M. Trotsky's camp of such figures as Messrs. Kamenev and Zinoviev—the very men who demanded his expulsion from the party in December 1925—made it no longer a mere conflict of opposing theories, but a struggle for power.

With Asiatic ruthlessness the Georgian, M. Stalin, swung the whole tremendous force of the press and the party against the Trotskyist critics. The Party Congress of December 1927 expelled them wholesale, and in January 1928 they were scattered in exile throughout Siberia and Central Asia, under police supervision scarcely less rigorous and far more efficient than the Tsar's.

At one fell sweep the Communist party thus was deprived of

many of its ablest minds and—the most tragic feature of the whole affair—they had been right this time, from the Russian communist viewpoint. That is to say, they had accurately foreseen the fight for socialism against the kulaks, which began almost immediately after their downfall and gave at least a semblance of justice to the charge that Stalin, after disposing of his opponents, had “stolen their thunder.”

But there could be no mercy for Trotsky and his followers because they had broken two cardinal rules of communist discipline. First, although they had been within their rights in opposing the majority program until the decision was reached, they had committed the unpardonable breach of refusing to bow to that decision when the will of the majority was proclaimed and affirmed by vote. Second, as if that disobedience were not sufficient, they had committed the flagrant sin of “appealing” against the party line to the popular masses by attempted public demonstrations and by the dissemination of secretly printed documents. This in the circumstances was sheer counter-revolution, and was punished as such.

It must be remembered that Trotsky by temperament and tradition had always been “the cat that walks by itself” in Russian revolutionary circles, and indeed had only rallied to Lenin’s Bolshevik banner in 1917. He had never learnt the essential wrongness of heretical deviations from the party line which had been stamped upon the older school of Bolsheviks by Lenin himself. The latter appreciated Trotsky’s value and was able to control his vagaries, but with Lenin’s passing, as he foresaw on his deathbed, a clash between Trotsky’s individualism and the rigid discipline of the communist system could no longer be avoided.

Moscow, *January 1, 1929*.—It must not be forgotten that the essence of Marxism, which replaced the Greek church as the

orthodox religion of official Russia, is class warfare. Class warfare in Russia means a fight to destroy private property rights and the right of individualists to employ labor, and a fight to replace them by state employment and state ownership.

The outside world, doubtless, thought individual property and ownership were destroyed by the Bolshevik revolution. In point of fact this never was true, but in any case both were definitely restored by the Nep—on a small scale, but liable to grow. Urban Nepmen did, indeed, grow to such an extent that it became necessary to take “extra-legal” measures to repress them; that is, the deliberate stretching of taxation and labor laws to put them out of business.

This occurred in the years 1924 and 1925. During that period Trotsky was demanding similar measures against the same Nepman class in the villages. From the communist viewpoint he was probably right, though premature. His controversy with Joseph Stalin and the Communist party majority so occupied the energies of Russia's rulers until the end of 1927 that no review of the internal situation or sweeping decisions could be possible. Once the opposition was disposed of, however, the victorious majority had leisure to look around and see what was happening in the country they ruled.

They found a situation that not only, to their sorrow, bore out what the Trotskyists had been saying, but that would have staggered any political leaders less accustomed to crises than the Bolsheviks. State collections of grain from the peasants, which meant mobilization in the hands of the state of the principal source of the national wealth, had fallen during October, November, and December 1927, despite the excellent harvest, to a dangerous degree. Far from having an expected surplus for export the Soviet state found itself with barely enough grain to feed the army and urban centers.

The last fortnight of January 1928 was a strange and anxious period in Moscow, with rumor carrying wild stories of sur-



render to peasant influence by importation through urban Nepmen of manufactured goods, for which the state could not afford to pay, but which might be exchanged for needed grain.

Shaken by the fratricidal strife with the Trotskyists, the majority group seemed on the verge of abdication of its most sacred principles. But Stalin was not unworthy of the name he bears—the “man of steel,” as Lenin called him. He called the Communist party to action. A grain collection quota was given to district chiefs throughout the country with orders that it must be filled, and the whole mechanism of the Communist party—the army, Ogpu (secret police), Communist Youth League, and other government organizations—was employed in the struggle for grain.

Peasants were barred by armed troops from their natural markets and forced to sell their grain in the villages to state collectors at state prices. Private competition in grain buying was suppressed, and the grain “bazaars” in the towns were closed by order of the authorities. At the same time efforts were made to rush manufactured goods needed by the peasants to the villages.

The result was that the state grain collections, although failing to provide a surplus for export—which led to a large deficit in the national trade balance—nevertheless were sufficient for the paramount needs of the urban centers and the army, though at that it was found necessary to import more than 150,000 tons of foreign grain, despite the strain on the state exchequer.

The measures used to achieve this result—“extraordinary measures,” as they were rightly called—which in reality corresponded closely to the “extra-legal” measures above mentioned against the urban Nepmen in the preceding years, roused widespread discontent among the wealthier elements in the villages. Individual peasant enterprise had received such a comparatively free hand since the introduction of the Nep in 1921 that it not only had become really powerful but had begun to realize its power.

In May and June 1928 such a chorus of peasant protest reached the Kremlin that the communist leaders faltered. A "plenary session" of their highest executives in July decided that extraordinary measures of grain collection should be abolished and never repeated. M. Stalin himself and Premier Rykov reiterated this pledge in speeches broadcast throughout the country, and it seemed to foreign observers in Moscow that, after all, the peasant individualists had not emerged from the struggle defeated.

There followed, in fact, a curious period of indecision during August and September, when the Kremlin leaders appeared to shrink from tackling the problem of grain collections. As in the previous year, they had no manufactured goods with which to meet the peasant needs, but now they could no longer resort to "extraordinary measures" for getting grain.

Collections in July, August, and September were actually below the previous year, but October showed a figure that was a record in the whole history of Soviet Russia, and by the end of the month the total of collections was ahead of the same period of 1927.

To the Kremlin this seemed proof that the energy of the Communist party and its allied organizations had after all a real chance of overcoming the stubborn individualism of the peasants. There were, of course, pessimists who declared that the success of the October grain collections simply meant that the peasants then were paying the chief proportion of their annual taxes and that November and December would show less satisfactory results.

They were partly justified, although collections to the end of the year were well above those of 1927. In any case, the October success encouraged the Kremlin to begin serious organization of a fight against the rural Nepmen.

The plenary session of communist executives in November decided to attempt a program of rural socialization comparable

to that successfully carried out in urban centers. That this was precisely what Trotsky and his brilliant colleagues, now sitting desolate in Siberian exile, had advocated was of no concern to Stalin, who had realized, like them, that within the limits of Russia—and the far narrower limits of communist mentality—no abiding compromise between the opposing forces of socialism and individualism was possible—one or the other must be supreme.

It is characteristic of Russia that the dispute came to a head on the agrarian question, which transcends in importance the other internal issues.

Moscow, *January 5, 1929*.—During 1928 the Soviet government continued its policies of extensive subsidies to industry, mostly in the form of capital investment, according to its five years' industrialization plan. Progress in the industrial field remained steady throughout the year and showed a total production increase in large-scale industry of more than 20 percent, whereas agricultural production showed only a fractional improvement.

There were not lacking, however, suggestions, even from high-placed communists, that the rate of industrialization was overswift for the resources of the Soviet state, and complaints that too large a proportion of the money invested was being devoted to producing machines and other means of production rather than to actual goods, of which the country was in great need. Such critics pointed out that one of the principal reasons for the peasants' reluctance to part with grain at state-fixed prices was the continued shortage of goods and their relatively high cost.

The excess of the national demand for manufactured goods over supply was, if anything, more acute than in the previous year, owing to increased purchasing power of the urban centers

as a result of higher wages and a greater demand of the villages, owing to higher grain prices.

A further important point was a reduction in business done by private traders. Whereas in 1927 it was estimated that some 32 percent of the retail trade was in private hands, the year just ended shows only 17 percent. In the communist view this is regarded as progress and an achievement, but from the strictly economic standpoint one may form other conclusions.

While the communist spokesmen were exulting over the growing elimination of the Nepman and individualists there occurred an unfortunate failure of grain export, which, despite all Soviet efforts, brought about a large deficit in the foreign trade balance and placed a severe strain upon the heavily burdened national budget.

It was not a mere coincidence that in the year 1927 a fifth or more of the total urban consumption of grain—which averages 9,000,000 to 10,000,000 tons—was supplied by private dealers, thus allowing the state to export nearly 2,000,000 tons. In 1928, however, the nation-wide suppression of private grain dealers forced the government to use all its supply for urban consumption, and export disappeared.

The goods shortage in towns and villages alike was increased and made more burdensome by the repression of private traders, whose relatively greater efficiency and lower overhead enabled them to give the public better service than the still clumsy and expensive mechanism of the state and co-operative merchandising.

It will thus be seen that, although the socialization process in the towns was advancing much more rapidly and in a political sense more successfully than in the villages, there were factors making the picture as a whole less rosy. The goods shortage brought about a marked recurrence of "queues" in the city streets and caused a good deal of grumbling among the workers. There were even in some localities brief strikes at factories, perhaps

lasting only half an hour or an hour, because a strike in Russia today has a quite different function and significance from a strike in a capitalist country, but it is hardly less disquieting for that.

The factories being theoretically run for the benefit of the working class, strikes hardly ever occur in the Soviet system, except as protests against unpopular management or to express some other form of discontent. As wages everywhere are fixed according to a predetermined scale, strikes never occur on this account unless—which is now comparatively rare—there is delay in payment.

Such strikes, however, were rare and sporadic, not comparable to the widespread discontent aroused by the “extraordinary measures” and other methods of socialization in the villages, where innumerable cases of arson and a great increase in assault or murder of Soviet officials and communist representatives took place. Nevertheless, such prominent communists as M. Uglanov, secretary of the Moscow Communist Party committee and one of M. Stalin’s intimates, found it necessary to protest against the over-rapid rate of industrialization.

Such protests were branded by the party executives as “right” or “petit bourgeois” heresy. Emphasis was laid by the Communist party resolutions in November upon this “dangerous deviation,” and the removal of a large number of Communist party officials—including Uglanov himself—from secretarial positions tends to show that criticism was more widespread and stronger than cursory reading of the Soviet press would imply.

Thus 1928 may be summed up as a year when urban socialization was reinforced and rural socialization formulated and put for the first time on a practical working basis. Both these processes involved, as has been shown, corresponding repression of the capitalist or individualist or Nepman—in Russia today the three words become almost synonymous—elements in both towns and villages.

Moscow, *January 11, 1929*.—The year 1928 made little change in the ruling personalities of the Communist party and the Soviet government.

In the final battle at the Communist Party Congress of December 1927, the Trotskyist opposition had declared that a "dictatorship of a secretariat" had been substituted by the majority group for a "dictatorship of the proletariat." They charged that Joseph Stalin, as secretary general of the Communist party, controlled the whole organization from top to bottom through a chain of secretaries, each nominally elected by his own immediate comrades, but actually, said the Trotskyists, appointed from above.

It is difficult for an outsider to estimate how far the charge is correct, but there seems no doubt that the authority of M. Stalin is extremely great, and that, when even such an important Communist official as M. Uglanov, secretary of the Moscow Party committee, ventured to oppose his policy, he was forced to resign, and his place was taken by M. Stalin's nearest supporter, M. Molotov.

As the world knows, the Trotskyist organization was broken by wholesale expulsions of its leading members from the party and its chiefs exiled under police supervision to distant parts of the country. Without a grave national or some internal upheaval, both of which at present seem improbable, it is unlikely that the Trotskyists will be allowed to return or resume office in the near future, save at the price of complete submission. Some of them, including Kamenev, Zinoviev, former Finance Commissar Sokolnikov, and Pyatakov, already have submitted and received responsible positions. All probabilities in this respect, however, might be upset in the event of M. Stalin's death; he has suffered from cardiac dilation, although he was reported in better condition in the past year, and certainly looked quite well when he attended the last session of the Soviet parliament a month ago.

As repeatedly pointed out in my dispatches, the real executive authority is vested in the Central Committee of the Communist party and in its permanent inner junta of a dozen party leaders called the Politburo, rather than in the Soviet government or Council of Commissars, whose task is to embody party resolutions in legal form and carry them into effect.

There is, however, a considerable overlapping of members of the Politburo and the Council of Commissars. For instance, four members of the bureau—Alexander I. Rykov, Mikhail I. Kalinin, Jan Rudzutak, and Klementi Voroshilov—are, respectively, chairman of the Council of Commissars, President of the Soviet Republic, Commissar of Railroads, and Commissar of War. But their functions in the bureau outweigh these posts in importance, and several of their colleagues in the Council of Commissars, including such well-known names abroad as Chicherin, Lunacharsky, and Semashko, are in reality little more than glorified experts called in by the executive for consultation purposes with little voice in the executives' decisions.

On the other hand, certain members of the Politburo, like M. Bukharin, editor of *Pravda*, M. Tomskey, president of the Central Federation of Labor Unions, and M. Molotov, have a share in executive decisions, but are not members of the Council of Commissars at all.

During the past year there have been few changes in the position of these leaders, either as executives or in the Council of Commissars. There were whispers current in Moscow during the summer and autumn about divergences inside the executive on points of policy. Although M. Stalin in September took occasion to issue a categorical denial of any dissension, it was significant that the replacement of M. Uglanov by M. Molotov and the resignation from the Moscow committee of other prominent critics of the administration policy did follow within a fortnight.

The discrepancy between the July plenary session of the

Communist party executives, which seemed to indicate that the agrarian policy would be modified "rightward" and the November plenary session of the same body which reaffirmed the "leftward" trend, was explained in Moscow by the theory that Kalinin, Rykov, and Voroshilov feared that agrarian socialization was being pushed so fast as to arouse opposition in the villages to a point that might become dangerous.

A remarkable statement in *Pravda*, issued by M. Bukharin in the interval between the plenary sessions, tended to confirm this theory. M. Bukharin reviewed the whole economic situation in such a way as to indicate doubt as to the immediate wisdom of the agrarian and industrial policies, although he did not go so far as to express open criticism.

The Soviet capital buzzed with the wildest rumors of dissension during the November plenary session, and its decision to maintain or even reinforce the leftward swing came as a surprise to many. Its resolutions, furthermore, laid such insistence upon "rightward heresy" as one of the gravest dangers to party orthodoxy, that criticism of the executive policies may have been more severe and more widespread than the unanimity with which the resolutions finally were voted would indicate.

As matters stand today, the doubters seem not only silenced but won over and M. Stalin is firmly in the saddle. The unlikely event of a setback to communist influence in the coming nation-wide elections might cause a renewal of criticism. Even more effective in this respect would be any marked decrease in the spring sowing area or prospects of a bad harvest as a result of climatic conditions or for any other reason.

Moscow, *February 1, 1929*.—News of Leon Trotsky's deportation is as yet unpublished here and is known only to officials and a comparatively limited communist circle.

It may now be permitted to state the circumstances which



led to this unusual action. Authorities recently discovered that an active Trotskyist organization in Moscow was carrying on a vigorous propaganda in Moscow and other urban centers by means of handbills and other methods, particularly among Communist Youth and the army. The organization had arranged an "underground railroad" for the transmission of letters to and from the exiled leaders and to sympathetic newspapers in Berlin, Riga, and elsewhere abroad.

Two weeks ago the authorities, who had been reluctant to take further steps against their former comrades, were, from their viewpoint, forced to intervene and raided the conspirative center, making numerous arrests. Despite the clearly counter-revolutionary character of their aims and methods, the offenders were treated with comparative leniency and deported to Siberia instead of being brought to trial on a capital charge.

It was then decided to follow Lenin's method with L. Martov, M. Dan, and other dissidents in the past and send Trotsky abroad. The opposition remnant here got wind of this and issued a handbill from an unlocated printing press stating that he would be sent to Turkey, where he might "die" in the mountains or "be killed by a White Russian assassin."

Somehow this statement got into the hands of the *London Daily Mail* and was published ten days ago. This caused a certain delay in carrying out the plan, but Wednesday night foreign correspondents finally were allowed to hint guardedly that the former war lord had gone abroad with his wife and son.

If and when the news becomes public here, it is not likely to cause much emotion among the general public, which is more interested in economic questions than in the long-drawn-out intra-party controversy.

Communist opinion naturally deplores the turn taken by Trotsky and other leaders who rendered such service to the Soviet state, but party discipline is considered far stronger than personal regrets.

## STALIN: MAN, MOUTHPIECE, MACHINE

*(Sunday Magazine Article, January 18, 1931.)*

ONCE upon a time, as old tales say, there was a certain Chinese Emperor who deemed that some of his most powerful subjects were lacking in the proper respect due to himself as Son of Heaven, and after much thought decided that the reason was his own insignificance of feature, unworthy of his exalted station. So he summoned the chief of his craftsmen and bade him fashion a mask closely resembling the imperial lineaments but with a trifle of added sternness and dignity. This he wore for a month and noted with self-gratulation that his great lords listened more attentively to his words, and that there was less strife than heretofore in the courts of the women.

Again he summoned the master craftsman and ordered a second mask, closely resembling the first, but yet more dignified and stern. A third followed and a fourth, each with more notable effect, until finally on the fifth day of the fifth month, which by fortunate chance was the imperial birthday, the fifth mask struck awe and wonder in the hearts of all beholders, so that henceforth the Son of Heaven spoke only with a soft and gentle voice, scarcely above a whisper, and the mightiest among his lords and the fairest among his ladies bowed low in solemn reverence, then leaped instantly to do his bidding.

This ancient fable contains a lesson that has not been lost on modern rulers, especially those whose power is based on their own achievement rather than on the "divine right" of birth. Who shall compute what Mussolini owes to the savage glare of force and determination in which he has set his heavy Italian jowl, or what old Clemenceau gained from the grim

rigidity of his Mongolian features? Masks, both of them, to impress beholders, for nearly all men, save only the very greatest (those rare integral souls of whom Mohammed said, "Once in a thousand years Allah chooses a servant to lead mankind with whom he speaks directly and allows to see his face like Moses, or me, his prophet"), have moments of doubt and weakness, when they must hide their true selves from their followers in order to win to power and hold it fast.

Many of their masks are not facial; they retire behind a screen of mystery, or aloofness, or reserve, until they seem to the masses, and even to those near them, to be treading the heights, alone upon a mountain top. And gradually a legend is created to serve their purpose, "Silent Cal," "Murphy, the Imperturbable," "Foch, the Devout Warrior," and "Stalin, Man of Steel, the Recluse of the Kremlin." It is not all a play, of course, for no man achieves greatness and retains it but by unusual qualities of mind or body, and with the passage of time the element of artificiality grows less, as oft-repeated acts form habit and habit crystallizes into character, as Aristotle proclaimed 2000 years ago. Thus the legend merges into truth and Napoleon becomes "The Man of Destiny," whose fate is the fate of France, and Murphy is identified with Tammany by a tie that only death can loose, and Stalin stands out to the world as the Communist party, which rules all the Russias yet cannot unseat his mastery though he spur it ever so sharply. Because his legend has grown too great, too real, he has become flesh and bone, of a living organism; the horse and rider are transformed to Centaur; he is indispensable and they cannot remove him without a risk they dare not take. That, today, is the last secret of Stalin's power; should opposition grow strong and noisy, he can meet it in the final instance, as Lenin once met it in the days of Brest-Litovsk, by the threat to retire and leave them to their own devices. Which they cannot bring themselves to accept. And he knows it, as Lenin knew it, and they know it,

as those who intrigued against Croker or Murphy knew it. The leader is identical with the cause.

But what of Stalin himself, and how has he performed this miracle of transmutation? What is the man behind the legend or the mask? Is he human, like the rest of us, or some strange mechanism, some robot—soulless, or, stranger still, an echo or phantom, compacted into human shape and seeming by the thought and will of millions of zealots for this newest and harshest of religions, communism?

The truth, as always in this crazy patchwork life of ours, lies vague and diffused between all three conceptions. There is the Man—Stalin; the Mouthpiece—Stalin; the Machine—Stalin; and in all of them, uniting and animating all three, the “inner God,” as Plato called it, of Stalin, which is will power.

It has long been my fancy, after wide experience of men and cities, that there is somewhere a key to persons and problems, to unlock men’s characters and reveal the secret of events, if only one can find it. In the case of Stalin, this remote reticent lord of all the Russians, he gave me the key himself. He said he became a revolutionary because he could not stand the Jesuitic repression and martinet intolerance of the Orthodox church seminary where he spent some years. Those are his own words, and came right from his heart, although he gave other reasons, about his poor birth and surroundings and revolutionary friends, and all in the proper Marxist manner.

But the truth of it, the key to young Joseph Dzhugashvili, later Stalin, was that he had in him a fire of revolt against tyranny and would brook no master. He was wild and hot-blooded and impatient, as Georgians are, and inside him hating bitterly the Russian conquerors and their Orthodox church, which was, in his land of superstitious peasants, a valuable tool of government. But his mother was proud and happy when the boy of fourteen won a scholarship to the church school and had before him the career that has brought happiness to so many

mothers in France and Ireland, of becoming a priest and perhaps later—who knows?—a bishop, or higher still. The peasantry of Ireland and France are tough and dour and practical beyond all Georgian limits, yet to this day they will sweat and sacrifice to make their son a priest.

So young Joseph—Soso, they called him—went off to school with rough homespun clothes and a cake, no doubt, and a goat's-milk cheese in his bag, and his mother's prayers. And he felt, too young—because when you are young it hurts—that his mother's hopes and prayers were founded on quicksand, that in the eyes of his Orthodox church teachers the glory and wonder, even the material advancement, of priesthood had become a crude matter of playing the Tsarist game in the conquered yet untamed Caucasus. If he would sell his soul to the conqueror, he might go far and high and be paid in the golden guineas of fame and comfort. If he stayed true to his "inner god," though it broke his mother's heart, he must revolt.

That, perhaps, was Stalin's first battle and first self-conquest. He has now become a legend of hardness and icy decision. Stalin, the man of steel, to whom Lenin cried on his deathbed, as did David of Joab, son of Zeruiah, "This man is too hard for me," and Lenin added, "He is too avid of power and his ambition is dangerous." Stalin told this himself three years ago in open congress of the Communist party, and said quietly (the Chinese Emperor spoke almost in a whisper): "I told you then and I repeat it now, that I am ready to retire if you wish it." "*Nolo episcopari*," as they said in ancient Rome. But it is easier far to play politics as a full-grown man than risk at seventeen breaking a mother's heart. Stalin took that risk and it hurt him—who can doubt it?—and drove him in upon himself for comfort and encouragement. Then, at his life's crisis, he heard of Lenin, another young rebel, and, though the world knew it not, one of Mohammed's "chosen leaders." Lenin was a beacon light to him.

"Lenin," he told me, "differed from the rest of us by his clear Marxist brain and his unfaltering will. Lenin from the outset favored a hard-boiled policy and even then was picking men who could stick it out and endure." To the Stalin of today Lenin is so far above him that, when I wrote he was Lenin's "successor," he made me change it to Lenin's "disciple." It was not modesty but a statement of fact. Stalin is a great man now as the world reckons greatness, but Lenin was different—he knows it—one of the very rare and greatest men.

So Stalin set himself to follow Lenin's star, from which he never wavered in the worst ugliness of defeat or in the darker days when Lenin had a bare handful of followers in Switzerland, and the world and other Russian revolutionary parties said he was crazy and far too extremist and could never get anywhere, anyhow. But Stalin had set his will to follow Lenin, with all the native rebellious fire of his Georgian blood transmuted into stubborn faith and, when one after another of the Bolshevik leaders escaped from exile or prison to an easier life abroad, he "stuck it out and endured" in Russia, passing from one alias to another, one prison to another exile. Small wonder that he grew hard and cruel, until finally in good earnest "the iron entered his soul" and instead of killing him fused there with his own iron and Georgian carbon and became steel. Meanwhile, in prison and out of it, he built up the future party machine from men as hard and full of will as he.

Which Trotsky, the brilliant Trotsky, did not reckon with or understand, nor Radek, that Odysseus of many devices, nor Kamenev, the crafty old war-horse, as Lenin called him, nor the polished and subtle Rakovsky, nor Bukharin, whom Lenin loved, nor Rykov, the wise Agamemnon, who balanced this against that and argued forth and back. In later days, after Lenin's death, Stalin played one of them against the other and broke them each in turn. Because always, deep down underneath, he thought of them half disdainfully as "émigrés," who

had fled before disaster while he and those like him stayed and stuck it out.

(Lenin, it may seem strange to those who do not know Lenin, or Russia, was exempt from all reproach, whether he enjoyed joking over beer with his friends in Switzerland or bicycling with his friends in Paris. Because Lenin was Lenin, the incarnate superman of Nietzsche, the "chosen leader" of a thousand years. I have seen Lenin speak to his followers. A small, busy, thick-set man under blinding lights, greeted by applause like thunder. I turned round and their faces were shining, like men who looked on God. Lenin was like that, whether you think he was a damnable Antichrist or a once-in-a-thousand-years' prophet. That is a matter of opinion, but when 5000 faces can light up and shine at the sight of him, as they did, and I saw it, then I say he was no ordinary individual.)

In his heart, too, I am certain Stalin has a profound jealous dislike of what is defined here as "bourgeois culture," the mental agility of trained minds which is so baffling to those who do not possess it. Baffling and humiliating, as many a self-made American executive who has not been to college dimly feels, though he hates to admit it even to himself. In Stalin's case it derives partly from his hated schooldays; partly from his genuinely "proletarian" origin, which contrasts with the "bourgeois" birth of the rivals he has defeated successively; partly, perhaps principally, from the fact that he is not gifted with great intelligence and creative ability. Lenin once said of him that he was the highest type of mediocrity, and did not mean it unkindly.

For there is virtue in mediocrity—did not Aristotle set it the highest?—and it is no easy task for a revolutionary leader to steer the middle course. Robespierre, whom Lenin considered the most brilliant of the French revolutionaries, met his death in Thermidor because he swung too far to the left—though not, Lenin added, until Marat's murder had cut him off from contact

with the masses whom Marat controlled. Stalin held the middle road when the Trotsky opposition tried to pull the Communist party to the left and again when the Troika opposition urged it to deviate to the right.<sup>1</sup>

Stalin's utter single-mindedness, ruthless perseverance, and veritable genius for political organization brought him to the topmost peak of individual power in the world today, but he has "the defects of his qualities," as the French say, and one of these defects is envy of quicker brains which can leap where he must plod and produce new ideas beyond his own imagination. In comparison with the mental finesse of Trotsky, Stalin is crude, yet when it came to political maneuvering he showed a patience and dexterity with which his cleverer opponent, who at the outset had a position of equal strength, found himself, to his surprise and dismay, wholly unable to cope.

For Stalin plays politics as Foch played war, or as Murphy ran Tammany (and Tammany resembles the Bolshevik party far more than either Tammany or the Bolshevik party would like to hear), with supreme skill and above all with patience. I shall never forget the agonized cry of General Marchand (the Marchand of Fashoda) on the bridge of Château-Thierry, before the Americans got there and after he had been driven helter-skelter from the Aisne to the Marne, "What is Foch doing, why are there no reserves to support us?" Or the bitter words of Gouraud's chief of staff six weeks later in July at the height of the "Kaiserschlag," the last great German offensive, which Ludendorff hoped would win the war, "They have reached the suburbs of Épernay; a kilometer more and they will turn our flank, and our victory when we checked their attack three days ago will be wasted." And the next morning at dawn, at the psychological moment, Foch, who had allowed the Germans to sweep down to the Marne, and see the Montagne de Rheims almost within their grasp, which indeed would have

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<sup>1</sup> The Troika consisted of Rykov, Bukharin, and Tomsky. Cf. *Infra*.



turned Gouraud's flank, struck back. And the war was ended in a hundred days.

Stalin has much in common with Charles Murphy, that cold, ruthless, hard-faced political boss. A slow, non-creative mind, a dislike of talk and publicity, brutal lack of scruple, and a contempt for cleverer men. And inhuman perseverance and a genius for organization. And the power to take punishment, without forgiving or forgetting but without sign of hurt. How he must have writhed inwardly under the lash of Trotsky's wit. They hated each other even then in those early days of the revolution, when Trotsky was Lenin's right hand and Stalin was just plodding up the "escalator."

Stalin went in '19 or '20 to fill a breach in the Red barrier against the Whites. (He did it and they named the city after him, in memory, Stalingrad.) He had full powers from Lenin and his first act was to shoot a lot of "doubtful" people and fire a number of Red Army chiefs he considered inefficient. Trotsky, as Commissar of War, telegraphed a protest, and the message as Stalin received it still exists with a scrawl across it in his writing, "Pay no attention." Had Lenin lived, he, Stalin, and Trotsky might have formed the greatest triumvirate in history, but with his death the clash he foresaw, and deplored, became inevitable. Only a few days ago there was published here a letter of Stalin to Lenin, dated March 1921, which contained two rough and piercing, because well-founded, sneers at Trotsky and Rykov. In addition to his other qualities Stalin has a long memory. He may not be a good friend—anyhow he has few friends—but he's a mighty bad enemy.

He has been reproached, by Trotsky and others, with a hatred for superior intelligence and the desire to surround himself with mediocrities. I am certain he would say, "Better a dull man I can trust than a bright man I'm not sure of," but there is more to him than that. He reminds me not only of Murphy but of Foch, who had within him a core of bright,

burning faith and idealism. Foch was a military genius as Stalin is a political genius, but when Foch ventured into world affairs and the realm of ideas and came in contact with the brains of wider capacity than his own special chess game, he was less successful.

Stalin is like that, too; he has the same steady, unwinking gaze as Foch, the same soft voice, the same patience, and, especially, the same faith within him and the same selfless devotion to his cause. And the same limitations, but in addition an idea, born perhaps from his own consciousness of intellectual mediocrity, that he is not the "chosen leader," the "successor" of Lenin, but the disciple, the chosen vessel, through whom Leninism and all that it implies will henceforth be given to the world. In short, the mouthpiece.

You can see what strength that would give to a man who inside himself—under his crust of rough brutality and harsh words, which disturbed Lenin on his deathbed and made Stalin, though so powerful, wellnigh friendless—is suffering really from a "shyness complex," shrinking from the world of new thought and clever sayings that bewilder him. Henceforth his own entity, with the qualms and doubts he has repressed and conquered by sheer force of will, is submerged and ceases to trouble him, because of this fresh discovery that he is no longer Joseph Stalin but the mouthpiece of the word, Lenin's word. He is not the dictator of all the Russias, nor the arrogant ruler of the Communist party, but an instrument, a chosen vessel, to express the will of the party along the lines laid down by Lenin, its founder. I admit this comes dangerously close to metaphysics and the elusive doctrine of predestination, but Stalin, after all, is no Slav fatalist but a Caucasian, who can hold fast to the thread of his own free will in the labyrinth where Slavs are lost. That he senses and follows "the party line" (that mysterious Holy Ghost of the communist religion) is true as death. That he forms and inspires it is no less true.

I believe to some extent in the Mouthpiece Stalin, as an escape device from his own shyness and limitations, but beyond it there is another and stranger conception, the Machine Stalin, who is the slave of his own highly organized party mechanism, which he started and whose wheels he set whirling and which he is now powerless to stop and scarcely can control. This theory coincides rather terribly with the mouthpiece theory, is indeed its logical consequence and conclusion. William Bolitho had a sort of nightmare short story which I believe he never wrote about an autobus in the middle of London which suddenly became sentient and revolted from human dominance and charged bloodily through the streets, maiming and killing. In a way it is the same here, Stalin has created a great Frankenstein monster, of which, as I said earlier, he has become an integral part, made up of comparatively insignificant and mediocre individuals, but whose mass desires, aims, and appetites have an enormous and irresistible power. I believe it is not true, and I devoutly hope so, but it haunts me unpleasantly. And perhaps haunts Stalin.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (page 355) for a sketch of Stalin's youthful supporters—the backbone of this "Frankenstein monster."

## IN RUSSIA'S GIGANTIC CRUCIBLE

(*Sunday Magazine Article, November 30, 1930.*)

MARXISM, to Soviet Russia, is not merely an economic theory, but a philosophy of life—one might almost say a new religion. It was modified by Lenin, who first applied it in practice, as Leninism is being polished and perfected by his successor, Stalin. But Marx is still the Bolshevik Bible and his sayings have the force of texts. One of them, ever recurrent in Soviet speeches and writings, says: "A man's consciousness is determined by the conditions of his life," or more briefly, "Character is formed by circumstances."

This phrase, or text, is the stone upon which Lenin, and Stalin after him, have tried to build New Russia. It is their supreme justification for all the waste and suffering and terror and cruel change that the Soviet revolution has caused. It embodies the quintessence of their faith that human nature is plastic, that the life-ways of nations or individuals can be turned into fresh channels, that the new and unknown may successfully replace the old and familiar, in short, that environment is everything and heredity nothing.

Lenin once said, "Give me four years to teach the children, and the seed I shall have sown will never be uprooted." Curiously or not, he was repeating what the Jesuits have learned and what Freud made public after them—that environment and impressions of earliest years mold human nature more surely than accident of birth. Physiologists may reply that inherited defects cannot be cured—at most can be but modified—by early training. The Bolsheviki will agree with him and admit they cannot put a thinking mind in the skull of a hopeless cretin or give sight to a child born blind. But the strength of the Soviet

creed is that it deals with masses, not with individuals; with the average not the particular; and they believe that Marx was right in saying that humanity does change in changed surroundings and that not only children but adults can be taught new ways.

Yes, the Bolsheviki believe it, but are they right or wrong?

True, they point to the collective farm movement, which is revolutionizing the life and habits of Russia's peasant millions to a degree and extent that Lenin alone perhaps dreamed of when he raised the red flag in Petrograd thirteen years ago, but which has surprised and startled his successors and upset their plans. Most of the "growing pains," as the Bolsheviki call them, from which the celebrated Five-Year Plan is now suffering, are due, directly or indirectly, to the unexpected expansion—success, if you like—of the agrarian reform. When it was started two years ago, it was planned that 20 to 25 percent of Russian farms should be collectivized. Already the percentage is from 30 to 35, and will probably reach 50 before the end of next summer. In other words, the Bolsheviki contend that the peasants, the most stubborn and conservative element in Russian national life, are accepting a fundamental change as a duck takes to water.

It sounds well—doesn't it?—as a proof of the rightness of Marx. But I have now lived nearly ten years in this peculiar country and know something of its ways and of the subtle Bolshevik art of "dialectic," as they call it—and as Aristotle called it more than 2000 years before they were born or thought of. One might argue just as easily that the success of collectivization does not prove that Marx was right and that even the peasants can be changed by circumstances, but that the real answer is that the Russians are unstable as water, ever eager, like the Athenians of old, for some new thing, and that, once the novelty has worn off, they will return again to former ways.

Or that they are being driven and cajoled, as a skilled mule-driver handles his mules, into collective farming, but, as soon as the blows or carrots cease, the mule will act as mules do—that is, dig its hoofs in the ground and refuse to budge.

All of which is neat and hypothetical and “dialectical” on both sides, but does not really prove anything whatsoever.

It seems to me, in considering the question as to whether the revolution has changed the Russian character, that the only honest and reasonable way to approach it is first of all to decide what was the “Russian character,” if any, and then later to discuss how far, if any, it has been changed. It is perhaps unfortunate that the Western World has formed its judgment of Russians from the works of Dostoievsky, Chekhov, Tolstoy, and Turgeniev, all of whom were more or less discontented intellectuals, frustrated by the Tsarist regime in performing the function they would normally have performed in a more democratic state.

Without questioning their genius, I cannot but question their authority as portrayers of the “Russian soul.” What they really portrayed was the souls of themselves and those like them, intolerant of existing conditions yet powerless to alter them; profoundly dissatisfied with the life and social order around them, but forced to vacillate and kowtow before overwhelming authority. Surely Dostoievsky in particular expresses the blood and spirit of impotent revolt? And from them we Westerners have learned that the “typical Russian” was an erratic, unstable creature, capable of spurts of energy or decision, but devoid of the sturdy, poised New England perseverance that made America great.

With all due deference to Dostoievsky, I am inclined to think that his Raskolnikov did not represent Russia at all, or at best represented only the frustrated intellectual Russia of Dostoievsky himself. Because there were three Russias in the old days,

not one Russia. First, the Russia of the Tsars and nobles and officers and officials, from high to low, corrupt no doubt in places, but busy and purposeful, satisfied with itself and its divine right to rule. Second, the Russia of the intellectuals, dissatisfied, purposeless, and impotent. Third, the Russia of the people, voiceless, enslaved, and unhappy—and 140,000,000 strong. To make the picture complete one might add two other elements: the trading bourgeoisie, infiltrating everywhere, but only strong in its corrosive effect upon the old-fashioned, rigid structure of Tsardom; and the revolutionaries, willing to die if they could smash that structure by their death. One of them was Lenin.

Dostoevsky—and even Pushkin and Gogol, who reflected their country in a far wider mirror—left out of his account the “dark” illiterate masses, which were indeed in his day of no account. And therefore his picture of the Russian soul is false, or at least too narrow. His Russian, the “typical Russian” of the Western world, was at best only typical of a portion of the 10 or 15 percent of the Russian population which ruled the remaining 85 or 90 percent.

Gogol knew better, and Pushkin, but they were long dead, and the twilight intelligentsia of fading Tsarism had lost touch with the “worker and peasant masses,” upon which Lenin called to sweep away old cobwebs.

The Bolshevik revolution and its consequences eliminated, for all practical purposes, though with some difficulty, the Tsarist and noble Russia, the old-time intellectual Russia, the bourgeois Russia—in fact, everything save the illiterate, enslaved, unhappy Russia of 140,000,000 souls. Then what are they, psychologically; or what Russian writer has portrayed them?

The answer is—no one, though perhaps Gorky has come nearest, so that the world abroad today really knows little of the type of Russian now being submitted to the Bolshevik experiment. They are mostly illiterate peasants, or semi-illiterate

workers, removed only by half a generation or so from their peasant ignorance. But they have learned the lessons of life in a far sterner school than Dostoevsky's intellectuals. They are hard-boiled and practical, brought face to face always with the task of wresting life by hard labor from the rebellious soil. They are not impotent or purposeless, or, like Hamlet, undecided, but just ignorant, hungry folk, eager to seize anything that will improve their lot. Because, unlike the intellectual or noble classes of Dostoevsky or Tolstoy, their problem has hitherto been simple—not how Russia should be governed or what life means, but how to eat and live, if they can. What is their character which Tsarist writers have failed to reveal, and how has it been affected by the Bolshevik revolution? Perhaps the chief determining factor in the character of the Russian people, which seems originally to have belonged to the most sluggish of the so-called Aryan invaders of Europe, was the geographical and climatic conditions of the vast East European plain in which they came to dwell. There were no granite crags like Ehrenbreitstein or a thousand others in Western Europe on which military leaders could build strong castles for protection of their folk. For miles and countless miles Russia was one broad, dreary steppe, spotted here and there by squalid villages. Even its cities, built on rivers or at the intersection of trade routes, offered little protection against attack, and the country was conquered and pillaged by successive waves of invasion—Northmen from Scandinavia, the Mongols of Genghis Khan, Tamerlane's Tatars, and finally the Poles.

Like Louis XI of France, Ivan, surnamed the Terrible, united his country in a system of defense against foreign foes. It has never since been successfully broken, but it was erected at the expense of the Russian people, by a prodigious system of centralized authority, more like that of China than that of Europe, which made the peasants little more than slaves. Slaves—but not yet lost to the ancestral way of nomad wandering over



the mighty steppes, which the laws of serfdom that lasted until the middle of the last century tried to curb by harsh penalty, and tried in vain.

In these circumstances it was inevitable that the Russian masses, kept by their masters in a state of ignorance and slavery, came to exhibit the usual characteristics of servile psychology. They became cunning, treacherous, and cruel, with a surface obsequiousness toward their "betters." They found life dreary in their dirty hovels amid the lonely steppes and sought escape by wandering, despite all penalties, and failed to find it.

Then Alexander II set them free from serfdom in 1861 when the first beginnings of the industrial era in Russia were demanding an urban proletariat to work the new machines.

But centuries of oppression, even the harsh invasions which preceded them, had not been an unmixed evil to the Russian race. Their sluggish blood had mingled with the blood of their conquerors. They had learned to endure hardship above all peoples of Europe. They had learned, especially in the villages, the value of united effort, which later was to stand the communists in good stead, however the success of their revolution in Russia might contrast with the theories of Marx, who believed it would first occur in an industrial state. Finally they acquired the shrewdness and toughness of fiber which come of continual struggle.

Even in the works of Dostoievsky and other intellectual writers, when they talk of the Russian peasant or semi-peasant proletariat, there is evident this toughness which contrasts so sharply with the "fit and start" decisions or indecisions of their "intelligentsia" heroes.

And there was always working within them the stronger blood of conquering races, urging them to revolt. It was not for nothing that in Lenin's veins ran a stronger strain of Tatar.

With the Bolshevik revolution these former slaves came to power, as Kerensky himself declared, and the comparative ease

with which they swept away the old aristocracy and intelligentsia and bourgeoisie—all the people, in short, about whom Dostoevsky and Chekhov and company wrote and whom they held up to the world as “typical Russians”—is the best proof that the masses were different and that in them there was some unsuspected hardness and staying power which intellectual writers had failed to fathom.

The Russian masses, however, whom the Bolsheviks set out to change with the full belief that such a change was possible, were still for the most part of a servile mentality, dishonest, greedy, and unwilling to accept responsibility. How was the change to be effected? Willa Cather says in one of her books that Moses made a self-respecting nation of his people, that had been slaves in Egypt, by emphasizing the importance of every item of their daily life, diet, and behavior, as strictly regulated by the ordinance of God. Confronted by a similar problem, Lenin took a similar line, but instead of God he set up the state as his Almighty Power and taught his people that, while they as individuals were negligible, and while their desires, even their happiness and lives, mattered nothing in comparison with the state, they nevertheless had each a high personal value as component parts, however minute, of the state organism.

In the name of the state the people of Russia are being submitted to a course of discipline, to a restriction of its natural instincts and tendencies, which seems to be growing more severe as the Bolshevik conception of the state as “All-in-All,” at first confined to a mere handful of the population, has spread over the country and grown stronger. At the same time, however, great stress is being laid upon individual initiative in an effort to make the masses understand that in giving extra time or sweat or service to the state they are in truth working for themselves also, as part and parcel of an all-embracing body. Peasants and workers are being encouraged by promotion and re-

ward in goods or money or in privileges to offer suggestions for the improvement of work in farm and factory or to engage in special volunteer effort in any branch of national life. Simultaneously they are being taught discipline—by precept and example, by pressure, by all that is meant by propaganda in pictures and the written and spoken word, and by education, in the sense of mental training, which formerly was denied to all save a favored minority.

The extent and universality of this training process is not, I believe, fully realized by the outer world. Apart from the regular school system which from October 1 of this year makes at least an elementary education compulsory for all children during the four years from seven to ten, every factory, office, business establishment, store, and other enterprise has special classes for its backward and illiterate employees. In addition, every member of the Communist party (which numbers upward of 2,000,000), of the Communist Youth League (about 3,000,000), and the Young Pioneers (now approaching 4,000,000) is required each in his or her sphere to devote a large portion of time to "social work," unpaid of course, which is defined by communist authority as meaning "the effort to raise the level of the masses by precept and example." This justification of faith by works has become during the past year in all three Communist bodies the supreme test of members' "civic virtue," and failure in this respect was the commonest cause of expulsion or reprimand in the recent "party purge."<sup>1</sup> The children in particular are being trained more intensively and with more direct purpose for adaptation to the needs and service of the state than anywhere in the world today.

Last but not least in the training of New Russia comes the Red Army—the earliest, because most necessary, creation of the Bolsheviki. However haphazard and bedraggled it was at first,

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (page 358) for a description of a "party purge."

however disloyal to the Soviet its officers and technical experts, then drawn from the old regime and pressed for service by threat of death to themselves or their families, the Red Army today is a well-disciplined, powerful instrument and devoted to the Soviet cause. Off duty there is camaraderie between men and officers, but on parade or in action the distinction between those who give orders and those who receive them is sharply marked. Finally, the army is efficiently equipped with tanks, airplanes, artillery, and machine guns of Soviet production. Which seems to contradict the argument that Russia can never be successfully industrialized because Russians will never learn how to handle delicate machinery and modern industrial methods. I am not speaking of the army and its character and equipment from my own knowledge only but from the testimony of foreign military attachés here.

As far as the mass of the population is concerned, it is early yet to say that any marked change has occurred. The inertia of the majority which had been a *plus* for their rulers during centuries and perhaps even to the Bolsheviki in earlier years, is now becoming a *minus* when the call is for energy. The nomadic instinct, never eradicated, has developed great confusion and difficulty in the realm of industrialization, where the "labor turnover," due in many cases to reports of better conditions elsewhere but often simply to the innate desire for change, has reached incredible proportions in Soviet factories and construction works. The native gloom of the Russian steppe still finds, as in the days of the Tsar, hoggish drunkenness or wild bursts of unreasoning fury as its easiest outlet.

Despite severe penalties, dishonesty is rife, and the spirit of *laissez-faire*, the Russian "nichevo," still works infinite havoc. An official of the Commissariat of Railroads, whose percentage of wrecks and "unfortunate incidents," as the Russians call them, has grown alarmingly under the strain of the Five-Year Plan, said to me recently in exasperation, "I should like to im-

pose a fine of a ruble for each use of the word 'nichevo.' It is the curse of Russia; we cannot seem to make them understand that it does matter if the signal is shut or open, or the light red or green." One hears the same story from foreign engineers about the Russian attitude toward machines. "They don't seem to care," they say. "As if there were no difference between the speed at which a lathe or spindle should be run efficiently and run to ruin, or that it mattered not to a tractor or automobile whether lubrication functioned properly."

Nevertheless, the Bolsheviki argue that, if they have been able to change the Red Army from a more or less disorganized mob, largely officered by "class enemies," and utterly ill-equipped, to a self-respecting, efficient force, loyal and resolute and well supplied with the principal requirements of modern warfare, it would seem to follow that similar improvement can ultimately be made with the population as a whole. Or, in other words, that human nature—even adult human nature—can be changed. With the youngsters the change is already evident. Take the three Communist bodies, the Pioneers, aged eight to sixteen, the Communist Youth, aged fourteen to twenty-three, and their elders, full members of the party. The latter for the most part were brought up under the old regime, the Communist Youth spent its earliest years under the old regime, but the Pioneers have known nothing save the victorious revolution.

The membership of all three bodies is reserved to peasants and proletarians, but the Pioneers were never slaves to any Tsar or landlord. They are tough with the toughness of the Russian masses, but they have learned discipline and the lesson of self-respect from the ground up, without any prejudices. Their eager alertness and freedom of bearing and their unexpectedly good manners contrast quite notably with full-fledged communists, who are rather offhand and rough.

The Pioneers are Lenin's children, whom he wanted to teach.

They are the hope of communism, which is attempting to teach them that money doesn't really matter, or sex, or superstition, and that their first and last and only duty is toward their fellows and the state.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (page 359) on the "Three Classes of Bolsheviki."

## STALINISM

PARIS, *June 13, 1931*.—Russia today cannot be judged by Western standards or interpreted in Western terms. Western Marxists and socialists go nearly as far wrong about it as the “bourgeois” critics because they fail to understand that the dominant principle of the Soviet Union, though called Marxism or communism, is now a very different thing from the theoretical conception advanced by Karl Marx.

In thirteen years Russia has transformed Marxism—which was only a theory anyway—to suit its racial needs and characteristics, which are strange and peculiar, and fundamentally more Asiatic than European.

The dominant principle in Russia today is not Marxism or even Leninism, although the latter is its official title, but Stalinism—to use a word which Joseph Stalin deprecates and rejects. I mean that, just as Leninism meant Marxian theory plus practical application plus Russia, so Stalinism denotes a further development from Leninism and bears witness to the prodigious influence of the Russian character and folkways upon what seemed the rigid theory of Marx.

Stalinism is a tree that has grown from the alien seed of Marxism planted in Russian soil, and whether Western communists like it or not it is a Russian tree.

Old Russia was an amorphous mass, held together by a mystic, half-Asiatic idea of an imperial regime wherein the emperor was exalted to the position of God's vice-regent, with limitless power over the bodies, souls, property, and even thoughts of his subjects. That, at least, was the theory, and it was only when the Tsars themselves began to question it and “act human”

that a spirit of doubt and eventual rebellion became manifest.

The Tsarist regime was poisoned by the European veneer that was spread over Russia—a veneer that was foreign and at bottom unwelcome to the mass of the Russian people—and one of the things the Bolshevik revolution did was to sweep away this alien crust and give the essential Russianism underneath an opportunity to breathe and grow. Which explains why the Bolsheviks, who at first were a mere handful among Russia's millions, were able successfully to impose their dominant principle—namely, Marxism—which in superficial appearance was far more alien than the Germanized or Westernized system it overthrew.

The truth is that the ideas outlined in the *Communist Manifesto* of Marx (which incidentally expounds his whole philosophy far more simply, lucidly, and concretely than the ponderous *Capital* and should be learned by heart by anyone who wishes to understand the Soviet Union) suited the Russian masses much better than the Western theory of individualism and private enterprise imported by Peter the Great and his successors, who finally perished in the conflict it involved with the native character of Russia.

Lenin took and shaped Marxism to fit the Russian foot and, although circumstances compelled him to abandon it temporarily for the New Economic Policy, he always maintained that this political maneuver was not a basic change of policy. Sure enough, Stalin, his successor and devout disciple, first emasculated Nep and then set about abolishing it. Today Nep is a sorry slave in the outer courts of the Soviet palace.

That is what Stalin did and is doing to our boasted Western individualism and spirit of personal initiative—which was what Nep meant—not because Stalin is so powerful or cruel and full of hate for the capitalist system as such, but because he has a genius for political management unrivaled since Charles Murphy died.



Stalin is giving the Russian people—the Russian masses, not Westernized landlords, industrialists, bankers, and intellectuals, but Russia's 150,000,000 peasants and workers—what they really want, namely, joint effort, communal effort; and communal life is as acceptable to them as it is repugnant to a Westerner. This is one of the reasons why Russian Bolshevism will never succeed in the United States, Great Britain, France, or other parts west of the Rhine.

Stalinism, too, has done what Lenin only attempted. It has re-established the semi-divine, supreme autocracy of the imperial idea and has placed itself on the Kremlin throne as a ruler whose lightest word is all in all and whose frown spells death. Try that on free-born Americans, or the British with their tough loyalty to old things, or on France's consciousness of self. But it suits the Russians and is as familiar, natural, and right to the Russian mind as it is abominable and wrong to Western nations.

This Stalin knows, and that knowledge is his key to power. Stalin does not think of himself as a dictator or an autocrat, but as the guardian of the sacred flame, or "party line," as the Bolsheviks term it, which for want of a better name must be labeled Stalinism.

Its authority is as absolute as any emperor's—it is an inflexible rule of thought, ethics, conduct, and purpose that none may transgress. And its practical expression finds form in what is known as the Five-Year Plan. The Soviet Five-Year Plan is a practical expression of the dominant principle—which for convenience the writer will call Stalinism, although Stalin still terms it Leninism—that rules Russia today with absolute authority.

In a sense it is far more than a plan—and in another sense it is not a plan at all. It is a slogan for a national policy and purpose rather than the glorified budgetary program which it appears at first sight to be. Most persons outside Russia seem to

think that, if the Five-Year Plan "fails," it will be the end of Bolshevism and that, if it "succeeds," it will mean the end of capitalism elsewhere. Nothing could be more absurd or more wrong.

The Five-Year Plan is nothing more or less than applied Stalinism, and its mass of bewildering figures is only the thermometer to measure the degree of heat engendered by the application of the plan, but is not otherwise intrinsically important. The figures have been changed so often and so considerably as to cease to have real value save as an indication of the "tempo," or rate, at which Stalinism is gaining ground.

To the rest of the world it is a menace only in the sense that Bolshevism itself is a menace—which may or may not be true. To Russia it is only a hope or promise in terms of what Bolshevism itself offers. But to the Russian people the Five-Year Plan is infinitely more besides—it is a goal to aim at, and its inception cannot but be regarded as a stroke of genius by anyone familiar with the Russian nature.

Russians, ignorant or wise, have a positive passion for plans. They almost worship a plan, and the first thing any one, two, or more Russians ever do about anything is to make a plan for it. That, after making his plan, the Russian feels satisfied and seems to lose sight of the fact that a plan must next be carried out is one of the great obstacles Stalin and his associates are now facing.

So, to conceive a whole national policy and everything in the national life as one gigantic plan was the political *tour de force* that put Stalin in the highest rank. Everyone who has employed Russians or worked with Russians or knows Russians finds that, if he wants them to jump on a chair, he must tell them to jump on a table, and aiming at the table they will reach the chair. The important thing is that they have something to jump at and make an effort—whether they actually get there at once or not does not really matter in a country of such vast natural

resources and with such a tough and enduring population.

What matters is that they keep on trying, and that is what Stalinism and its Five-Year Plan is set to make them do. In other words, the Five-Year Plan is something for the Russians to measure at, not for the rest of the world to measure Russians by. This sounds confusing, but it is true, and if you cannot understand it you cannot understand Russia.

The whole purpose of the plan is to get the Russians going—that is, to make a nation of eager, conscious workers out of a nation that was a lump of sodden, driven slaves. Outsiders, “viewing with alarm” or hooting with disdain as they take and play with Soviet statistics, might as well be twiddling their own thumbs for all it really counts.

What does count is that Russia is being speeded up and fermented—and disciplined—into jumping and into making an effort and making it altogether in tune to the Kremlin’s music. That is why the Soviet press utters shouts of joy about the Five-Year Plan for oil production being accomplished in two and a half years and does not care a rap when some meticulous foreigners comment about the fact that nothing like the five-year amount of oil has actually been produced.

What the Soviet press really means is that in two and a half years the daily production rate—or tempo—has reached the point set for the end of the fifth year of the plan—in short, that oil has jumped on the table way ahead of time. That the said rate may only be maintained with the utmost difficulty has small importance to Russian logic, and rightly so, because a successful effort has been made and what a man has done once that man can do again.

Russia and Russians and Russian logic are different, but the fact that they are different does not necessarily mean they are wrong.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (page 362) on “The Five Year Plan—Bolshevik Heaven.”

In succeeding dispatches the writer will try to show what this difference is and how it works; more immediately, how the Five-Year Plan works in practice in this—as the Russians call it—“third and decisive year.” And, incidentally, by “decisive” they do not mean critical or deciding of success or failure, but victorious—deciding success only.

PARIS, *June 15, 1931.*—To start, as the writer does, from the premise that the Five-Year Plan is not a mere budgetary program or a rigid scale of facts and figures, but a national policy and slogan, and a physical expression of all that is meant by “Stalinism,” does not prevent persons outside of Russia from saying, “Whether that is true or not, what we want to know is how the plan is working and what will happen if it works?”

The first question is particularly hard to answer because the Soviet Union is the first example in history of a country in which home and foreign policy, home and foreign trade, industry, agriculture, finance, and other activities are all gathered, so to speak, in one hand, each of whose fingers is interdependent and mutually affected by the others.

That this is true must be understood from the outset—confusing though it seems at first sight to speak of Maxim Litvinov’s rather unexpectedly successful speech at Geneva as being directly related to Soviet oil production, or freight-car loadings, or timber export, or the spring catch of fish and the grain sowing program.

In an attempt to diminish this confusion the writer will treat Soviet foreign relations and foreign trade in subsequent articles and right now consider the Five-Year Plan’s economic side.

First and foremost comes agriculture, which for the next decade at least will count most in Russia. Here, too, something other than economics enters at once—the Five-Year Plan in addition to the economic production of agriculture involves the

political socialization of peasant holdings, or collective farming as it is called.

The writer ventures to say that it is far more important to the Kremlin to have 60 percent of the peasant holdings collectivized this year—which is the case, as compared with the original Five-Year Plan program of 50 percent collectivization by 1933—than to produce an exportable surplus of 15,000,000 tons over internal needs. Well, collectivization, or the political end, has been done, and it will depend largely upon the weather as to how far the production program will be accomplished.

The same applies in general terms to industry. The Kremlin is more concerned over whether the industrial workers are learning their jobs and getting all keyed up for socialism by “shock brigades” and “socialist competition” than over what they actually produce.<sup>1</sup> At least, that is true for the time being. In this respect the political gains are greater than actual production, which varies from fair to middling, as far as raw materials are concerned, down to poor when it comes to finished products.

Oil production is good; manganese, good; coal, iron, and steel, middling; transportation, not so good but improving; non-ferrous metals, the same; and all manufactured goods, from electric light bulbs to tractors, nothing remarkable but growing in quantity and improving in quality. Detailed figures are confusing and do not matter much as compared with the “tempo,” but in any and all cases one may say that the supply produced is far inferior to the home demand.

On the other hand, the supply does grow and enables the Soviet Union to export enough to pay for purchases from abroad. What the supply costs and whether or not it is a product of an abominably low living standard simply does not matter to the Kremlin, which dismisses the dumping charge also

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (page 363) for an example of “socialist competition.”

as nothing more than a hostile manifestation. For the Kremlin knows it wants to raise the Soviet living standard and would much prefer to sell goods at high prices on a strong market than on a low and falling market.

But the Kremlin asserts it has no choice in the matter owing to the "credit blockade," which forces Soviet Russia to sell in order to buy the equipment and advice it needs from abroad. The foreign accusations that Soviet Russia is trying to ruin world capitalism by dumping are considered by the Kremlin to be beneath contempt. I will treat of this point later in a discussion of the present status and activities of the Comintern (Communist International).

A more immediate question is what success Soviet Russia is really making with its new heavy industry. Allowing that the Soviet Union can build great tractor or steel plants, electric power stations, and paper mills—can it run them properly? To that the answer at present is more generally no than yes.

Almost without exception new Soviet plants, coal mines, railroads, and other enterprises, clumsily and wastefully managed, produce goods of indifferent quality and in amounts below the schedule. But—and it is a most important "but"—the Russians are learning and improving every day. If they cannot get their steel mills built, they will give John Calder (an American construction engineer) unprecedented scope for a foreigner, to show them how; and to meet the coal shortage they are adopting a mixed commission scheme as suggested by Charles E. Stuart (of the American corporation, Stuart, James & Cooke).

That they will break and waste a lot of valuable foreign equipment is certain, but they answer that argument by saying: "Didn't American industrialization in the three decades after the Civil War cost a frightful amount of waste and grief? Didn't bank failures, panics, and railroad reorganizations cost tens and hundreds of millions of dollars? Take the history of the American transcontinental railroads, say, or oil development

or metallurgy—didn't you pay dearly for experience under your capitalist system?

"Our loss in ruined machines and misapplied effort will be far less than that of your construction period, where irresponsible and greedy individuals without plan or united purpose fought and wrecked each other and melted the nation's gold like water, careless of anything save that a fractional amount of the millions remained in their own pockets."

Just the same, in the writer's opinion, based on the advice of scores of foreign specialists of all nationalities, it will be twice or thrice five years before Soviet Russia gets her industry going on a scale and with an efficiency comparable with America's or Germany's now.

But suppose that happens—suppose the end of the next year shows the Five-Year Plan to be "successful" in the rate of industrial and agricultural production and in a vast increase in quantity—what then? In that case one thing is certain—and the capitalist world may as well realize it now as later—Soviet Russia will demand a place in the world export market at least equal to that of Tsarist Russia.

The Soviet Union is willing—nay, eager—to join in international quota arrangements with price and sales limitations on equal terms, or would doubtless consent to a reduction of her exports for the time being anyway, if credits were offered in exchange. But nothing short of a world embargo will prevent Soviet Russia from selling her goods—at a lower price than any capitalist country can meet—in order to buy the equipment she requires.

On the other hand, the Kremlin asserts its country offers the greatest potential market in the world today if only foreign countries will give it a chance to buy. Russia needs everything. Suppose her new factories and collective farms succeed beyond the wildest dreams—they still could meet only a quarter of the national demand.

"If you force us to compete with you," the Russians say, "don't howl when our competition ruins you. But why compete? Why not make an amicable arrangement for mutual benefit?"

That is the meaning of M. Litvinov's speech at Geneva and of the Soviet delegates' terms at the London wheat conference. M. Litvinov's speech and the wheat delegates' readiness to accept a quota system were apparently a surprise to the rest of the world, but not to anyone familiar with the recent developments of "Stalinism."

PARIS, *June 17, 1931*.—The essential feature of "Stalinism," which sharply defines its advance and difference from Leninism and which is the key to the comprehension of the whole Five-Year Plan, is that it frankly aims at the successful establishment of socialism in one country without waiting for world revolution.

The importance of this dogma, which played a predominant role in the bitter controversy with Leon Trotsky and later with the "rightists" (right-wing Russian communists), cannot be exaggerated. It is the Stalinist "slogan" par excellence, and it brands as heretics or "defeatists" all communists who refuse to accept it in Russia or outside.

Curiously enough, Karl Marx himself, in one of his earlier letters, described this theory as a fallacy and an illusion. Lenin, too, in his early belief that the World War would end in a stalemate, from which a proletarian revolution would be the only issue, was reluctant to admit that a single socialist state could flourish in a capitalist—therefore hostile—world. Trotsky, after characteristic indecisiveness (he once told a Communist Youth meeting in Moscow that world revolution was "far, far beyond the mountains"), tried to use Marx and Lenin to convict Stalin of heterodoxy.

Stalin had a clearer perception of Russia's possibilities and the reserves of untapped energy in her people, hardly less "vir-



gin" than her soil. He saw, too, that the Soviet Union was not "one country" in the sense in which Marx wrote, but a vast self-sufficing continent far more admirably fitted by its natural configuration and resources and by the character and ways of its population for a communist experiment than the compact industrial state, like England, that Marx prognosticated.

It can fairly be argued, no doubt, that Stalin may have been pushed further by the controversy with the Trotskyists and the rightists and by the enthusiasm of his younger followers than orthodox Marxism would approve. Indeed, such noted revolutionaries as Emma Goldman and Angelica Balabanova, with whom the writer recently talked, unite with Trotsky in accusing Stalin of "perverting" or even "betraying" the revolution.

But development along Stalinist lines became inevitable from the day the United States broke the war deadlock and brought about a post-war "capitalist stabilization," which, though they called it temporary, the Bolsheviki even now do not believe to be fatally shattered by the current world depression. For that matter, too, Lenin's New Economic Policy was a flagrant retreat from orthodox Marxism, and, if Stalin has had the will and strength to correct that change of the compass and bring the Soviet ship back to the Marxist course, he may surely be pardoned for a doctrinal adjustment required and justified by circumstances.

It does follow, however, that the theory of "Soviet socialist sufficiency," as it may be called, involves a certain decrease of interest in world revolution—not deliberately, perhaps, but by force of circumstances. The Stalinist socialization of Russia demands three things, imperatively—every ounce of effort, every cent of money, and peace. It does not leave the Kremlin time, cash, or energy for "Red propaganda" abroad, which, incidentally, is a likely cause of war, and, being a force of social destruction, must fatally conflict with the Five-Year Plan, which is a force of social construction.

The writer ventures to say that at the present moment the Communist International's activities are confined to the Communist parties of other countries and to a small group of zealots in Moscow, whose influence and importance are much more theoretical than real. Of course, Stalinism refuses to admit this openly, and takes refuge behind two theses—first, that world revolution is inevitable anyway as a result of capitalist economic rivalries (this is pure Marxist dogma which even zealots must accept); second, that the success of socialism in Russia is the best possible propaganda for the rest of the world.

But facts are facts, whether one admits them or not, and it is quite on the cards that the real source of the quarrel of Trotsky and foreign Marxist theoreticians with Stalinism is their realization that Stalinism, while retaining world revolution as an ultimate goal, has abandoned it as an immediate practical issue little less completely than the early Christian church abandoned the millennium or second advent when Constantine made it the official faith of the Roman Empire.<sup>1</sup>

PARIS, *June 18, 1931*.—When Lenin founded the Communist International in the early spring of 1919, it was a good deal of a question as to whether his basic purpose was an orthodox Marxist gesture or an act of Soviet defense.

As it happened, the Comintern harmonized with both purposes, but Lenin had a lot of practical opportunism, as the New Economic Policy showed, and he was not blind to the immediate advantage of forming an international organism to direct and co-ordinate the forces in capitalist countries that would work for the Soviet state and help counteract the forces working against it.

The evolution of Stalinism toward "Soviet socialist suffi-

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (page 366) on "Renunciation of Foreign Propaganda."

ciency" at first made it important to retain such sources of support abroad as the foreign Communist parties offered, and there was a period when the foreign Communist parties were severely disciplined by Moscow to tune them exactly to the Kremlin's note. America is a case in point, as Messrs. Lovestone and Pepper will bear witness.

More recently it has become apparent, first, that the Five-Year Plan—which, as previously stated, is a practical expression of Stalinism—is more successful than had been originally expected ("Five Years in Four" is now the most popular slogan in the Soviet Union), and, second, that the rest of the world is unable or unwilling to unite against Soviet Russia even for economic boycott, much less active intervention.

Reluctant as the Bolsheviks are to abandon the bogey of intervention or boycott—partly because of its solidifying and energizing effects on the masses and partly because the Bolsheviks have come to believe in it themselves by sheer dint of repetition—their growing strength as a result of the progress of industrial construction and rural collectivization has had the effect of substituting consciousness of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics as a world power for the somewhat panicky feeling of a proletarian pariah in a capitalist world.

The world economic depression doubtless has had much influence in developing this new outlook, but that belongs more properly to a later article on Soviet foreign trade. At any rate, it is a fact—and apparently one of the salient facts in modern history—that during the past eighteen months the Soviet Union has concluded something in the nature of an economic alliance with Germany and Italy, has given China a sharp lesson in the Chinese Eastern Railway affair, has called Japan brusquely to order in the matter of the Bank of Korea branch at Vladivostok, has been rudely curt to Secretary Stimson, and is now engaged in far-reaching economic negotiations with France and Great Britain.

In the present juncture it is the latter phase that is politically the most interesting. Three months ago it seemed that the Soviet Union was bent on building up or at least supporting a bloc of nations opposed to the Versailles treaty and French hegemony in Europe. France and her allies, Poland and the Little Entente, still loomed large as a bogey in Soviet eyes. England, it seemed to Moscow, was impotent or disinterested in European affairs, with a minority Labor government that might fall tomorrow.

Suddenly, almost overnight, came the Labor government's pact with Lloyd George and a spurt of British diplomatic activity to which Moscow reacted immediately. The anti-Versailles bloc that looked good against France and her allies became a chimera when England took a hand to influence Italy and Germany.

For Stalinism requires peace for success of its Five-Year Plan, and if Great Britain, who still remains the arbiter of the European continent, had decided to work hard for peace it was silly for the Soviet Union to play a game of hostile blocs, the effect of which would be to bring war nearer even though making it less dangerous for the Soviet Union. Hence Foreign Commissar Litvinov's surprising speech at Geneva and the negotiations now proceeding with France, which both France and the Soviet Union are trying to depreciate, disguise, and almost disavow.

That Germany looks at them askance and that Italy is not pleased do not affect the Bolsheviks, who play world politics according to Bismarck's rules and know that an ace or king of trumps beats a queen or jack. In this new big game the Communist parties of France, England, or Germany are an annoyance and hindrance, not a help, but the Bolsheviks rationalize that into a little deuce of trumps, whose fear-effect on their opponents may possibly take a useful trick.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union goes steadily ahead with its economic penetration of Chinese Turkestan, Mongolia, and

Manchuria, to say nothing of Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan, and without expenditure of effort or money the Soviet Union watches Chinese misrule sow new seeds of communism in the once Celestial Empire.

Toward the United States the Soviet Union is now indifferent—or, as a prominent official said to the writer, “For the time being we have written off America”—because it thinks America is too absorbed in her own affairs to take an active or intelligent interest in Europe.

It thinks the American State Department more silly than malicious, and its animosity against Representative Fish and fellow “Red hunters” scarcely extends beyond newspaper cartoons.

PARIS, *June 19, 1931*.—The Soviet foreign trade policy is now undergoing an evolution which perhaps has escaped the notice of Americans in the uproar about “Soviet dumping” and the “Red trade menace,” but, nevertheless, is of considerable importance.

The new guiding principle is that as far as possible the Soviet is trying to equalize the sales and purchases with each country. In the case of Italy the Soviet sells more than it buys. In dealings with the United States the Soviet buys more than it sells. This new principle is being publicly established in negotiations now in progress with France, the success of which is not assured but seems likely to reach a tangible result. If the principle could be put into effect in the whole foreign trade program, two valuable objects would be obtained, the automatic balancing of the foreign trade budget and the silencing of charges of dumping because each nation would decide what it wanted from the Soviet Union in return for its own goods and would be glad to purchase as cheaply as possible.

That such a perfect equilibrium is to be reached seems im-

probable for the near future, and hostile manifestations against Soviet exports doubtless will continue as long as world markets remain depressed. In Russian eyes such manifestations are wholly unjustified. It is argued the Soviet Union has the right to export at least a volume equivalent to that of the Tsarist Empire, which it still is far from attaining.

From this standpoint and with the consciousness of its growing strength, the Soviet is fully determined to face boycott by boycott and embargo by the transfer of its business elsewhere. It has shown its willingness to meet the rest of the world half-way, as it offered to do at the London wheat conference, and as it has done in oil and timber deals with the British interests, in price stabilization schemes or quota limitations.

"It is clearly less to our interest—we have an avid, clamorous demand at home for everything we export—to sell goods abroad at bankrupt prices than for the capitalist countries whose surplus stocks far exceed the capacity of home consumption," the Bolsheviki say. "What the capitalist countries sell abroad is a real surplus, whereas our sales inflict a hardship on our people and are a painful necessity in order to buy the equipment and technical knowledge we cannot yet produce at home."

Here the world depression pinches the Soviet hard, not only because of the odium involved in the charge of dumping goods at almost any terms upon an already saturated market but from the material loss in the depreciated prices. Soviet exports during the first half of the current year, though considerably greater in volume than in the same period last year, actually were lower in value, to the embarrassment of the foreign trade and treasury commissariats.

Despite the assertions abroad to the contrary, this correspondent can state positively that the Russians derive no pleasure from tightening their own belts to pay for imports and they would be delighted to retain for home consumption much of what they

are now exporting if a loan or long-term credits enabled them to buy without immediate payment. On the other hand, the world depression has been an important encouragement to the Soviet because it appears to demonstrate a grave flaw in the capitalist system.

The Kremlin has made the most of the political advantage thus given it, especially as far as the Soviet Union was concerned, and also in the programs and speeches of foreign Communist parties. The depression has had the effect, too, of reinforcing the Kremlin's self-confidence, which is an important factor in view of the criticism within the Communist party against Stalinism and the Five-Year Plan from the left and the right.

The world depression thus has played the role of forming and directing Soviet public opinion, which is not the least part of the Stalinist program, as will be described in a following article.

PARIS, *June 21, 1931*.—It may be said without fear of contradiction that the Stalinist machine is better organized for the formation and control of public opinion in a great country than anything history has hitherto known. Perhaps Mormonism during the "flourishing" period of Brigham Young might be offered as a rival, but that was on a relatively tiny scale and failed to endure.

Stalinism, on the other hand, has three tremendous instruments—first, the Communist party plus the Communist Youth and the Young Pioneers to a total of fully 10,000,000 of the most energetic section of the population, highly centralized, sternly disciplined, and trained to fluent speech and the subtle art of propaganda.

Second, there is the press, from the great central organs like *Pravda* and *Izvestia* with circulations of millions, to the village

and factory newspapers, multigraphed or handwritten by the tens and twenties of thousands. All follow the same line, obey the same control, and preach the same gospel.

Finally, the Stalinists control the radio, the appeal of which to the more ignorant people who cannot read has something mysterious and superhuman. During the past two or three years the Soviet Union has been covered by a network of powerful transmitting stations, each serving a wide region.<sup>1</sup> Though nation-wide hook-ups on the American scale are still a dream of the future, every factory and collective farm now has a loud-speaker, which in the final analysis is nothing but a fountain of Stalinism.

The labor federations and the Red Army also are harnessed to the Stalinist cause in an effective manner, but attempts to make literature, art, and the drama serve the same purpose have been less successful, and there are signs of a reaction against purely proletarian or propaganda art.

A story goes that Joseph Stalin himself was instrumental in obtaining an exit visa for Boris Pilnyak who had acquired some dislike through the "literary" and "nonproletarian" quality of his writings. It is also said that Stalin sharply rebuked the extreme left wing of the proletarian writers, whose code was that no literary skill or talent was necessary, that a coal miner could best write a novel about mines, a worker about factory life, and a conscript soldier about war, and that all novels or stories must have a strong propaganda purpose.

Stalin is reported to have told them he personally preferred Shakespeare and that if they had read more of Shakespeare and Pushkin they would produce "less rubbish like this," whereupon he threw back across the table a crude slipshod work by one of the younger proletarian writers, which had been submitted for his approval.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (page 368) on "Radio Broadcasting in Moscow."



It cannot be said, however, that the Kremlin abuses the terrific power of the press, the radio, and Communist party effort. Stalin may not be one of the world's great men in the sense that Lenin was, but he certainly "knows his politics" and has been careful to correct the dangers of unchallenged authoritative and unified control of public opinion by what is known as "self-criticism," which is not the least interesting feature of the Stalinist system.

Self-criticism is the salt in the Soviet home propaganda pie. It enables any writer or speaker, high or low, to take a violent and enjoyable crack at almost anyone or anything, provided he sticks to concrete facts or remains "objective," as the Russians call it, and refrains from the unwisdom—or positive danger—of ideological criticism or covert attacks on the "party line," which would brand him with heresy and disgrace.

The Russians by nature have a streak of anarchic iconoclasm, be they never so loyal communists, and "self-criticism" gives them welcome relief from the stark rigidity of Stalinism, a relief no less delightful because it is apt to be dangerous. There have been cases when over-zealous critics have been compelled to make ignominious retractions or have lost their jobs or have even been expelled from the party.

But it is a splendid safety valve, none the less, and so widely used by the Moscow press in particular, which is closest, of course, to the Kremlin, that a foreign observer often wonders whether everything is "going to the bowwows," so long and grievous is the tale of mismanagement, waste, and bureaucratic error. Its chief beauty is that few save the very highest dignitaries are spared from blame. Some cub reporter on the Communist Youth *Pravda* or an illiterate worker can sling a pebble at the railroad commissariat and get away with it if he only has got facts to back his charge.

To a foreign correspondent self-criticism is a potent though double-edged weapon. As a skate for thin ice it has unrivaled

usefulness—and peril. To employ it rightly brings the rhythmic charm of perfect balance; to misuse it means disaster. And the uncertain chance of one or the other makes the difficult and often dreary life of the American reporter in Russia so infinitely worth living.<sup>1</sup>

PARIS, *June 22, 1931*.—Being a capitalist reporter in Soviet Russia is a strange business, though not devoid of charm. As Jor-rocks said about fox hunting, "It has all of war's excitement with only ten percent of war's risk."

Although I am convinced of the stability of the Soviet regime, everything is so fluid here, and there is such an atmosphere of violent change that one gets the impression of living on top of a volcano.

Soviet Russia starts from the premise that it has had a cruelly unfair deal from the world press, which it holds is inevitable because the "hirelings and lackey-writers of capitalism" cannot fail to misrepresent and decry a proletarian experiment.

This is only partly true, to begin with, and anyway it is largely the Bolsheviki's fault. Until 1921, when the signing of the Soviet-American Relief Administration agreement broke the "press blockade" set up by the Bolsheviki against "bourgeois correspondents," no newspaper man was admitted to Russia who was not either a strong sympathizer or was presented and vouched for by someone whom the Bolsheviki trusted.

In theory, of course, a capitalist reporter is an enemy. In practice, especially if he represents a paper which is regarded as a pillar of capitalist society, he is treated with the respect that the good saints showed to Lucifer's major minions. The Soviet xenophobia (dislike of strangers) is acute, though it does not extend to individuals, and during recent years there has been a

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (page 369) on "Self-Criticism."

growing pride in the Soviet's own achievements which makes foreign observers increasingly welcome—on one condition, that they are sincerely trying to report the facts as they are and give a whole picture, not just the dark corners. With few exceptions there has been little serious friction between Soviet authorities and foreign correspondents.

Among the many difficulties, censorship, which is generally supposed to rank highest, is less terrible than is thought abroad. Though strict in a certain direction, it is usually applied with intelligence and moderation. Unlike most censors whom the writer has known in the past seventeen years, the Bolsheviks are always willing to discuss matters with a correspondent before a cable message is sent and meet him half-way in modifying a sentence so as not to break the thread of his message or even to convey in more moderate form the item disapproved.

During the past two or three years there has been no censorship of news sent by mail, but it is always understood the responsibility for such news will fall on the correspondent if the authorities object later, whereas for cable messages the censor himself must bear the brunt of subsequent official ire.

It cannot be said, however, that the Soviet press department is equally satisfactory in giving news to foreign reporters. Contrary to what generally is believed abroad—perhaps for that very reason—far from the Soviet government pumping propaganda into resident correspondents, the latter generally have to extract it drop by drop. When the writer contrasts the admirable mechanism of the French press bureau—that is, propaganda department—during and shortly after the World War with the aloof inertia of the “scratch-for-yourself” attitude of the Soviet Foreign Office, it becomes positively infuriating to hear people abroad say:

“Of course, Moscow correspondents write just what the authorities want.”

Far from knowing what they want, it is a labor of Hercules

to drag scraps of official information from the omnivorous monopoly of Tass, the Soviet government press agency, which often claims successful priority on important news.

If the Bolsheviki were less conservative—or, perhaps, less obtusely suspicious is a better phrase—they would abolish the cable censorship, as they have done with mail reports, and reserve the right to demand correction or take other measures for reports which they considered unfair or untrue. Then they would set their censors to work on providing news and indicating, if necessary, the official point of view as in London, Paris, and other European capitals, whose press departments have polished diplomats hand out news—real official news—with a subtle slant in their own favor. The press diplomats do their utmost to help the foreigner get news, interviews, and feature stories—that is their job—and hope for good results.

In Russia, however, if the British or German government sends a note to the Soviet government, what the world wants to know is the Soviet official reaction thereto, not what the writer or any other reporter imagines the official reaction may be. All too often, unfortunately, the foreign reporter is forced to make more or less accurate guesses or leave the point wholly uncovered for a day or more until *Izvestia* or *Pravda* editorials appear.

But where the censorship stabs the foreign reporters in Moscow in the midriff is the license it gives to their more imaginative or less cautious colleagues abroad, especially in Riga, Helsingfors, Bucharest, and points west, where "White" Russians maintain centers of anti-Soviet information.

So great is the influence abroad of the Soviet censorship myth and the myth of bought or terrorized foreign correspondents in Moscow that the most monstrous inanities from these border states gain ready credence. Riga "assassinates" Stalin, Kovno floods the streets of Moscow with mutiny and blood, Bucharest blasts the Soviet Ukraine with fire and sword, and meanwhile

the unhappy Moscow correspondent is unaware of these stirring events and is besieging the Foreign Office to find out just what point in the interminable series of Russo-Chinese notes may or may not be worth American interest.

If the people abroad could only understand it—or the Bolsheviks either—nothing could be more absurd. That the Soviet press is “controlled” does not mean that Rumor, flying, as Virgil said, faster than a Scythian arrow, does not carry news across the Soviet state and capitol, growing more magnified and dire as she flies.

Apart from the foreign correspondents and dozens of foreigners going daily to Warsaw or Riga, less than twenty-four hours distant, there are upward of a score of foreign embassies and legations with privileged cable codes and courier bags. Moscow is really a vast sounding board, where unprinted items of news echo loudest and little if anything of moment can occur without “grapevine” repercussion.

Take, for illustration, an incident that occurred on May 29th or thereabout at the Sukharevsky open-air market in Moscow, when a group of malefactors threw a smoke bomb at midday, the explosion of which was no louder than a pistol shot, and looted goods and money in the panic that ensued.

The stampeding crowd trampled seven children and two adults to death, and a score of others were injured more or less severely. On the same afternoon a foreign diplomat asked the writer about it. Between 3 and 4 p.m. I received two telephone messages on the subject. At 6 p.m. my chauffeur returned from a filling station with a lurid account. By 8 p.m. every square and street car was abuzz.

The censor said the story was barred, but that perhaps there would be a communiqué the next day. An investigation established the facts pretty exactly, but for some reason the authorities declined to release the affair. A week later the writer read in a White Russian newspaper abroad front page stories headed,

"Starving Population Revolts in Moscow," with the subhead, "Food Riots Occur at Many Points in Soviet Capital—Heavy Bloodshed—Police and Cheka Battalion Use Gas and Machine Guns."

Who is to blame for that but the Bolsheviki themselves? There is a glaring contradiction between their all-embracing and successful formation of public opinion at home and their attitude toward news for abroad, which, if secondary, is nevertheless important.

To lean over backward against helping or "propagandizing" foreign reporters may gratify the Soviet ego and caress the growing Soviet pride, but it makes life hard for foreign reporters.

PARIS, *June 23, 1931*.—If anyone doubts that Russia is swallowing Marxism, or that the "Stalinism," for want of a better word, of today is something integral, new, and growing with its own strong life sap, take what has happened to "the former people," as the Bolsheviki call the old ruling class, or, more immediately, to the kulaks, who oppose the collective farm movement.

Marx theorized about "the elimination of class distinctions" in his proletarian Utopia, but Leninism and Stalinism showed what the words meant in practice. So Tamerlane made pyramids of hostile skulls, or Samuel "hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord."

The last three words give a fiery glimpse of the Asian fanaticism that is Russia's heritage—tempered now by icy winters and a cold, north-European blood mixture to less violent if no less ruthless action.

The old ruling class—royalty, nobles, generals, and officials from governor to gendarme—have disappeared already. "The people who were" is a literal translation of the phrase "byvshi lyudi" used universally to describe them. They were but are

not—most of them have fled, or perished, and those who survive are living dead—phantoms of the past in the Soviet present.

They are so dead as to be already negligible, but what is happening now to the kulaks is leading to the same result—the kulaks who under Leninism were an almost privileged class and were encouraged to work and prosper (did not Bukharin, then Leninism's chief spokesman, who wrote *The A B C of Communism* as a students' bible, once say to the peasants, "Enrich yourselves," that is, become kulaks better than—or a different class from—your fellows by individual, self-helping effort?).

"The liquidation of the kulak as a class" runs the present slogan, whose meaning in terms of reality is that 5,000,000 human beings, 1,000,000 families of the best and most energetic farmers are to be dispossessed, dispersed, demolished, to be literally melted or "liquidated" into the rising flood of classless proletarians.

Here, when you get right down to it, is the supreme justification from the Bolshevik angle of the cruel and often bloody pressure upon "the former people" or "class enemies" from Tsar to kulak. Where Marxism theorized Stalinism acts. Marxism says, "Eliminate class distinctions," and Stalinism does so by the simple and effective process of destruction, as Tamerlane destroyed his enemies or the Hebrew prophet slew for the glory of Jehovah.

It is hard and horrible for the twentieth-century American to hear this, but facts are facts. Stalinism not only aims but boasts of aiming at the complete smashing of class boundaries, at the death of all distinctions save of talent and state service between man and man. Rank may replace class in the Bolshevik cosmogony to satisfy human needs, but rank based on merit, not on wealth or birth.

But what, you may ask, becomes of "the former people," or the kulaks or engineers thus doomed apparently to perish? Must all of them and their families be physically abolished? Of

course not—they must be “liquidated” or melted in the hot fire of exile and labor into the proletarian mass.

To illustrate—they take a kulak or other type of “former” individualism, a private business man or self-seeking engineer, and send him to the northern woods or Siberian construction camps. Sometimes his family goes, too. More generally it remains to be absorbed by poverty into the lower proletarian surroundings.

Then they tell him, “You outcast! You man that was, and now are not! You can get back your civic rights; can be reborn a proletarian; can become a free member of our ant heap by working for and with us for our communal purpose. If you don’t, we won’t actually kill you, but you won’t eat much, won’t be happy, will remain forever an outsider, as an enemy, as we consider it, even if ultimately you return from exile and rejoin your family. Because in this sub-communist ant heap those who are not with us are against us, and the final fate of such enemies is death.”

That, reduced to its harsh essentials, is Stalinism today. It is not lovely, nor, in the outside world, of good repute, and your correspondent has no brief for or against it, nor any purpose save to try to tell the truth. But truth it is—ant heap system, ant heap morality—each for all and all for each, not each for self and the devil take the hindmost.

An ugly, harsh, cruel creed this Stalinism, flattening and beating down with, so far, no more than a hope or promise of a subsequent raising up. Perhaps this hope is vain and the promise a lie. That is a secret of the future. But whatever happens later, it is the key and core of present Russia.

PARIS, *June 25, 1931.*—In an earlier dispatch your correspondent explained how Stalinism was being propagated by all the resources of the press, radio, and Communist party, from adults



to little children. There is another factor, however, whose importance is little less and in some respects is greater; namely, the Red Army and the drive for "civilian training in defense" from Osoaviakhim, or Soviet Air League, to the Workers' Battalion of men, women, and Communist Youth and the Young Pioneer Volunteer Corps.

A cognate phase of this movement is the inevitable growth of "nationalism," if it may be called that, although the Bolsheviks prefer the phrase "corporate spirit for the defense of the socialist fatherland," or something to that effect. This subject will be treated in the following article because the question "What is the true purpose of the Red Army and what is at the bottom of all this military training" has more immediate interest.

The Soviet always maintains that the Red Army, including the naval forces, does not surpass in peace time 650,000 men established on a territorial basis similar to that of Switzerland, which is a comparatively modest figure considering the size of the country's population. The Soviet sometimes "points with pride" to the far smaller proportion of military expenditure in its national budget than that of its Baltic or Polish neighbors, which is true on paper but somewhat disingenuous, as the Soviet budget is enormously swelled by industry, trade, and construction in the hands of the state.

There is a question, too, whether the so-called special or "Cheka Battalions"—long-term volunteer troops which form the garrisons of the principal cities and the railroad and frontier guards to the number of upward of 150,000—are reckoned in the 650,000 above mentioned. The writer personally is inclined to believe not and to regard these troops as corps d'élite that might either be shock forces in a foreign war or provide officers and non-coms for the semi-trained "Citizen Defense Corps" that would be called up if war were declared.

As far as spirit is concerned the Red Army is excellent and loyal to the regime. Conscripts enter 10 to 15 percent commu-

nist and leave on completion of service 45 to 55 percent. Officers are 65 to 70 percent communist in all ranks and 95 to 97 in the higher grades. The special battalions probably average around 70 percent communist. The civilian corps consists of organized workers of strong communist sympathies and adult or young communists.

In discipline, training, and equipment, it is the opinion of foreign military attachés at Moscow that the Red Army compares favorably today with that of any nation in Europe, although, no doubt, it is inferior to the crack divisions of the great powers. The Chinese Eastern Railroad affair shows the staff work to be of high order because though a comparatively slight operation from the purely military standpoint—that is, armed opposition was more or less negligible—it was carried out on a big scale in difficult terrain with excellent co-ordination and without a hitch. Foreign military observers also emphasized the admirable organization of the really impressive military demonstration on May 1st last in the Red Square.

Counting fully trained reservists, it is thus apparent that the Soviet could put in the field in the event of war a front-line force of 2,500,000 to 3,000,000 men, with 10,000,000 or so semi-trained civilian volunteers behind them. That is true on paper, but foreign attachés do not believe such immense bodies could be adequately supplied in present circumstances and that war would not see a front-line force of more than a million all told, and even then there would be difficulty about transport and an adequate supply of munitions.

As to the true purpose of the Red Army and the whole gigantic scheme of military preparation, I am prepared to stake my reputation on the fact that at present it is purely defensive, and for all I can see now will be so in the future. Europe's nightmares of a "Red horde" sweeping forward to world conquest are, in my opinion, either anti-Soviet propaganda *tout court* or atavistic bogies of Attila, Tamerlane, and the Turks.

Previous dispatches have shown, or tried to show, how "self-contained" Stalinism is and how thoroughly it has adopted Voltaire's advice to "cultivate your own garden." The Soviet's garden is big enough and rich enough in all conscience to be worth cultivating; but one must never forget that the Bolsheviks themselves are still haunted by their own bogey of capitalist intervention, and whether one hates the Bolsheviks or approves of them or is wholly indifferent, it cannot be denied that the years 1918 and 1920 gave them certain grounds for misgivings on the subject.

PARIS, *June 26, 1931*.—One of the most evident ways in which Soviet Russia is modifying Marxism is in the matter of nationalities and Soviet federation, for which Joseph Stalin was directly responsible as Commissar of Nationalities during the period prior to 1923, when the constitution of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics was adopted and the commissariat in question abolished.

Karl Marx conceived of the establishment of a proletarian dictatorship in a highly industrialized state, where the actual majority of the population would be urban workers speaking the same language and having the same needs, habits, and aims. For this homogeneous majority the elimination or absorption of other classes and sections of the population would be a relatively simple matter, once it gained political power and held the economic reins.

In Russia, however, things were quite different. The urban workers not only formed less than 15 percent of the population and the peasants more than 80 percent, but there was a vast divergence of race, language, custom, and culture, to say nothing of religion, among the 160,000,000 inhabitants of the Soviet Union; and what, from the Bolshevik point of view, was no

less important was the vast difference in "social consciousness" also.

In organizing the U.S.S.R. Stalin was forced to take cognizance of this anomaly from a Marxist doctrinal standpoint. He met it by a compromise, of which even British genius for making two ends meet need not have been ashamed.

Every nationality in the Union was allowed full linguistic autonomy and what might have seemed a dangerously lavish degree of cultural and political autonomy. Thus the Jews, who had remained alien expatriates under Tsardom, received a small autonomous area with the promise of an independent republic if and when the number of the population concentrated at any one point should justify the augmented status.

At first sight such an arrangement might seem to foster a spirit of petty nationalist and racial antagonism and universal disintegration—which is the exact opposite of what the Bolsheviks are trying to achieve. In a heterogeneous capitalist state—the British Empire, for instance—liberty given minor nationalities must have had a centrifugal effect, but in the U.S.S.R. the Communist party acts as a cement to bind the whole mass together and permit the facile exercise of central control.

For in practice two rules are followed in regard to the Soviet national system. First, the power is progressively restricted to "proletarian elements" of the population—the workers and poor peasants, whether industrialized or not. Second, 95 percent of the political leaders are communists, and, what is more, it is an almost invariable rule that the national Communist party secretaries and their most important district subordinates are either Russians or members of a different nationality from the people around them.

The strictness of the party discipline does the rest, and, although there have been cases of regional friction and sporadic difficulty, the system on the whole seems to work more smoothly

than any organization of a heterogeneous state yet devised by man.

Perhaps one of the secrets of its success is the annual convocation to the center of the regional party executives for a conference or congress and their relatively frequent switching from one national post to another. It must be admitted also that the Bolsheviks adhere with remarkable steadiness to their creed of communist equality irrespective of race or color, which assures the members of former "subject" peoples opportunities to rise to the highest central positions and removes any feeling of racial inferiority.

Stalin is a Georgian, Trotsky a Jew, Rudzutak a Lett, Dzerzhinsky was a Pole. These men offer salient examples for communists of every nationality in the U.S.S.R. It is thus clear that the Soviet federal system, while reinforcing nationalism, did not sacrifice cohesion and centralized direction.

The subsequent evolution of Stalinism tended still further to fuse or coalesce these apparently opposite forces—first, by an intensive and union-wide propaganda for the "defense of the Socialist Fatherland against capitalistic intervention." The purpose of the propaganda—and the achievement of it—was to divert and merge the fresh, strong currents of minor nationalism into a mighty river of Pan-Sovietism.

Second, the new industrial construction—new dams, railroads, mines, and factories, often in remote parts of the union—was concrete proof that each for all and all for each was true. Third, there is the new system of state and collective farms, not the least purpose of which is to bring the advantages of mechanized and organized effort to the humblest Tajik peasant or Cossack nomad.

Finally, there is the ever-driving energy of the Communist party, from graybeards to children, which the Kremlin radiates to the remotest edge of the U.S.S.R. like a current that makes all molecules cohere.

To say that this process is fully accomplished is premature, but there is small doubt that Stalinism has already achieved a marked degree of transmutation of petty nationalism into a great Pan-Sovietism—not aggressive, not, I firmly believe, “Red imperialism” aroused for world conquest, but strong and potentially dangerous should attack from without provoke it to reprisal.<sup>1</sup>

PARIS, *June 27, 1931*.—The characteristic of Stalinism that marks the continuing curve of progress from alien Marxism through semi-alien, semi-Russian Leninism toward something not yet attained, is that Russian Stalinism still is stiffening Communist party discipline.

This discipline is modified, as shown in a previous dispatch, by “self-criticism,” but is centralized and administered with military rigidity. No excuse or evasion of party orders is permitted, and infractions of discipline are punished by a reprimand, or, if repeated, by expulsion from the party.

Of this, Joseph Stalin himself, only five years ago, speaking in behalf of Leon Trotsky, when Leonid Kamenev and Gregory Zinoviev urged his expulsion, said:

“Expulsion is a final and fatal weapon to be employed only in a hopeless case.”

Today party members, even the highest placed—or the lowest placed and youngest, which is perhaps even more important—must give full obedience or take the consequences. Much water has run under Bolshevik bridges since December 1925, and profoundly have time and circumstances modified earlier conceptions.

Marxism was a theory, clear-cut enough in its fundamentals—which, be it always remembered, Stalinism retains almost with-

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (page 370) on “The Opening of the Turksib Railway.”

out amendment—but necessarily vague as to practice and application.

Leninism—anyway, at the outset, as the records show—was a sort of debating society where a small group of devoted comrades discussed policies with freedom and equality, sometimes wasting time and energy in discussion.

Stalinism is an imperial scepter, not decked with the golden orb and cross and the Orlov diamond of Tsarist rule but a bar of polished steel.

Stalin's opponents accuse him of absolutism, and it is true and false. Absolutism there is—not that Stalin wants it for his ambition or vainglory but because the circumstances and Russia demand it; because there is no more time for argument or discussion or even freedom in the Western sense, for which Russia cares nothing, because, in short, a house divided against itself cannot stand in an hour of stress.

Outsiders may write nonsense about Stalin's egoism and the purely personal quality of "the struggle for power" between him and Trotsky or Alexei Rykov or Zinoviev. Personal elements do and must enter into all human relations, but in default of familiarity with the New Russia these critics might study the early history of the Christian church, which was racked and torn far worse by "ideological controversy," as the Bolsheviks call it, than by the rivalries of leaders which came after the councils of Nicæa "set" or crystallized doctrinal confusion.

The parallel is sharper and closer than either Christians or Bolsheviks would care to admit. Christianity was a product of transcendent Jewish idealism, aimed at redressing inequality between man and man and establishing true human brotherhood and happiness. Marxism also.

The Roman Emperor Constantine made Christianity the state religion under an absolute ruler whose attitude toward what had been a persecuted and almost "revolutionary" creed was wholly

changed. Lenin made Marxism the state religion of Russia, with a change no less inevitable.

Christianity was further transmuted by contact with the Nordic nations of Europe, by their adaptation of it to suit their separate "Volkgeist." So now Russia, with its ancient Asiatic craving for mass action under an absolute ruler whose word is the law and the prophets, changes Marxism further into something grim and Russian over which orthodox Marxists abroad wring their hands and the Western world cries "slavery and terror."

Stalin didn't do it—if the truth were known it was perhaps done despite him—but Russia did it, is doing it, and will go on doing it whatever happens. Russia is not static the way Western society is static, but is fizzing and bubbling and fermenting—not fixed, but fluid and moving.

The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics is today really a "melting pot" to a degree that America, whose problem was absorption of alien minorities into an already defined social system, could never be.

To call the present phase Stalinism, as I have done for convenience, means nothing more than a label, because nations are bigger than men and facts of life outweigh theories of conduct. In this state of flux the rule of the Communist party is a unique guide and pole star—or, more properly, a compass, because the party, like a compass itself, is sensitive to deviation.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (page 373) on "Religion under Stalin."



## THE "RIGHT"—AND "LEFT"—OF IT IN RUSSIA

(*Sunday Magazine Article, October 11, 1931.*)

FOR the rest of the world right and wrong are opposites, but here in the U.S.S.R. it is "right" and "left," and "left" is sometimes right, but "right" is always wrong. Yet curiously enough the rest of the world has held stubbornly to its own interpretation, during the last ten years, that "right" is right, and to its belief that sooner or later the Bolsheviks will admit it, too, and that Russia will come back to a "normal" existence. Which denotes a profound and at this date childish ignorance of Bolshevik tenacity and fanaticism. The words "left" and "right" are used here, too, but in disapproval only, to describe heresies or "deviations from the party line." That sacred and mysterious embodiment of the Bolshevik spirit is held not to move, save forward, pointing ever to the goal of proletarian victory, and it is only when individuals or groups swerve away from it to either side that they are said to be "left" or "right." This is a hard saying, and difficult of understanding, but there are many things in Soviet Russia not easy for the Western mind to grasp.

I made the mistake myself, was one of the first to do so, indeed, almost exactly ten years ago, day for day, when the *New York Times* published my dispatch from Riga, giving the first full summary of Lenin's New Economic Policy decree, issued a few days earlier. I began my message with the words, "Lenin has thrown communism overboard," and a very good beginning I thought it was, pungent, concise, and true. A lot of other people agreed with me (in my interpretation of Nep, I mean), including, I may say, no small number of orthodox Bolsheviks, although the latter would probably have amended my phrase to the jettison of "militant communism," and the world in general

took it comfortably for granted that the Russians had grown tired of their fantastic experiment and were heading back to the primrose paths of capitalism and private ownership, camouflaged but not hidden behind a flimsy screen of "state control." Lenin, however, thought differently, and said so, whether we hearkened or not. And Lenin knew best.

Lenin declared frankly that Nep was a retreat, an admission that the obstacles in the way of direct progress would not yield to frontal attack, but must be "turned" by a flanking movement, but he maintained from the outset that Nep's purpose was not an abandonment or jettison of Bolshevik principles, but a "strategic movement to the rear," to gain ground for a fresh advance, a temporary maneuver, not a capitulation, still less a change of heart. In the months of argument that preceded the Nep decree its adversaries in the Bolshevik party might denounce it as a "right deviation," but once the majority of the party decided on Nep and the decree was issued, it became sacrosanct under the ægis of the party line, and only the rest of the world could speak of it as a "rightward move."

During the years of controversy within the Communist party, which followed Lenin's death, the terms "left" and "right" were freely bandied about between opposing groups but always in accusation, to connote the sin of heresy against the party line. At first Trotsky and his friends were charged with "leftism" when they wished to press on with the agrarian revolution and down the kulak before the time was ripe. They formed the "left opposition," and to the victorious majority both words were an equal reproach. Later Rykov's "troika" sought to stay the drive against individual peasant holdings and to slow the tempo of Five-Year Plan industrialization. Immediately they became a "right opposition," to be fought and vanquished, and so bitter was the shame of "rightism" that the unrepentant Trotskyists were now labeled, by a miracle of casuistry, "right" opportunists hiding behind "left" phrases.

But the outer world held fast to its delusion that Russia must sooner or later "return to normal," and the doubts that had been aroused by the steady encroachments upon the rights and privileges of private owners and traders (whose nickname "Nepmen" had become the Moscow equivalent of the German "Schieber" or the English "profiteer") in the years 1924, 1925, and 1926, were lulled by the successful resistance of Stalin and the majority to Trotsky and the "left." Once that combat was ended and Stalin's victory established, private property and the "natural way of existence," it was confidently expected, would come into their own again. Instead, in 1927-1928, Stalin astonished everybody by adopting much of the Trotskyist agrarian program he had recently denounced, less, he explained afterward, because it was wrong, than because it was untimely (and Stalin has a keen nose for the psychological moment), and it was the turn of Rykov and Bukharin to be caught napping in a "right deviation" from the party line.

From the end of 1927 until 1930 had begun there was no more tacking for the Soviet ship of state in its steady progress toward socialism—that is the best metaphor, of a sailing vessel that advances against the wind in long diagonals—but I repeated my earlier error and wrote of the "leftward" swing of Kremlin policy, as it squeezed the last golden drops from the Nepmen's veins and "liquidated" foreign concessions and plunged ahead with gigantic schemes of state industrialization and imposed collective farms upon the countryside. Suddenly, in March 1930, Stalin smelled another moment, and called a halt on "excessive" or enforced collectivization and charged those who had conducted it with "dizziness" as "left hotheads." This time, at long last, I understood the fundamental truth. "Right" and "left" are only words; the party line only seems to deviate but really stays constant, as one in a waiting train thinks he is moving when another train at the same platform begins to glide away. Zigzags, tacking, even Nep itself, are all .

maneuvers to catch more wind in the sails and hasten progress toward the port of communism which Bolsheviki call home.

Three months ago Stalin repeated his action of March 1930, and "put his ship about" on the other tack, waiting as he had waited before, as all skilled sailors wait, until he had gained distance before he swung the tiller. To say the ship moves left or right as the helm obeys the order "port" or "starboard" is easy and permissible enough, but to pursue the metaphor too far and deduce from it that the rulers of Russia have renounced their Marxist principles or abandoned their goal or are reverting to a "normal existence" is as wrong and misleading as to suppose a yacht gives up the race each time it tacks. Which is what the rest of the world is all too prone to do, because the rest of the world, especially Americans, who have benefited most by the capitalist system of private initiative and private property, cannot readily conceive that any other system, more particularly the socialist system, can be welcome or suitable or successful for Russians, or indeed anything but unnatural, abhorrent, and abnormal.

The Bolsheviki, however, think otherwise and their determination to create a successful socialist state, which they hope will ultimately become a communist state, is so intense and fervent as to warrant comparison with a fanatic religion. They did not swerve from their faith in socialism in the days when capitalist prosperity reached its peak in America and even some of the wiser heads in the United States were beginning to share the popular belief that the series of panics and depressions, which had marked the previous economic growth of the country, would never again recur. Today, of course, when American capitalism is being choked by the abundance of its own success in accumulating gold and producing machines, grain, oil, and cotton, to mention but a few examples where abundance spells disaster, the Bolsheviki are more than ever convinced that they are on the right track and that capitalism, whose "temporary

stabilization" they derided somewhat uneasily two or three years ago, is powerless to solve the problem of harmonizing production and consumption without submitting to such modifications, such restrictions of private rights and individual initiative, as to make it no longer capitalism at all as the word is now understood in America, or at best some form of state or controlled capitalism not far remote from socialism.<sup>1</sup>

To the best of my belief only two things can abolish the socialist regime, that is the Bolshevik regime in Russia—complete defeat in war with a foreign enemy or a struggle inside the Communist party so bitter as to lead to civil war. Both contingencies seem unlikely at present and grow less likely as years pass. Another contingency—that the strain of socialist construction might grow too great for national endurance, supposing for instance that a series of natural disasters (droughts, storms, or earthquakes) produced famine and pestilence—would not, I believe, destroy the authority of the Communist party here, or bring it to change its aims. The Kremlin might bend before the storm, but it would not break.

Some foreign observers have advanced an interesting theory during the last year or two—the theory of the historical parallel between Cromwell and the Puritans, who also inaugurated great moral as well as material changes in the life of a people, and Stalin and the Bolsheviks. Cromwell's regime was secure at home and successful abroad but it proved on the whole unwelcome to the mass of the people. As the Lord Protector grew old his suspicion of rivals increased, he became remote and untouchable, and within two years of his death the son of the monarch he had brought to the scaffold was back upon the throne of England, almost without a shot being fired or a drop of blood spilled.

There are fatal flaws in most historical parallels, and this one

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (pages 383 to 390) for dispatches which describe more fully the "zigzags" referred to *supra*.

is no exception. To begin with, Stalin is anything but remote or autocratic in method. I doubt if any national leader has his ear so close to the ground, and by all accounts his method in meetings of the Politburo, which is the real government of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, is to let other people talk, after he has briefly indicated the lines of discussion, and to reach a conclusion by the process of summary, comparison, and elimination of his colleagues' views. Second, the Communist party under Stalin is more highly organized and disciplined than the Puritans in the latter years of Cromwell's rule, and both it and the army and the younger and more energetic sections of the population in general are so thoroughly permeated by communist ideals as to have come to regard them as the only possible system here.

It can never be too strongly emphasized that, with the exception of a depressed and discredited minority, perhaps not larger today than 5 percent, no one in Russia has enjoyed the advantages and standard of life which are taken as matter of course by the average American or the sense of ease and security given by the possession of enough property to provide a comfortable independence. There is no privileged or possessing class, such as existed under Cromwell, to advocate or support the change to a different system of government. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the mass of the population is having a difficult time at present and that grumbling is common enough, not only in factories, mines, and construction camps, where the pressure is most directly felt, but among the peasants, whose lives and habits have been turned topsy-turvy by the collective-farm movement.

Beneficial or not in the long run, the collective-farm movement has produced effects immediately disturbing and doubtless on the whole displeasing to the spirit of individualism and conservatism which characterizes the farmer all the world over. Should Stalin die suddenly now, before the negative or dis-

turbing effects of his policies have been compensated by a positive improvement in living standards, it is just conceivable that there might be a brief moment of fear and uncertainty in the ranks of his followers, perhaps even a temporary slowing of the "tempo" his ruthless will has imposed, but anything more radical is hardly conceivable and after the first instant of dismay the party would almost certainly rally to continue Stalin's course.

It seems clear, in the first place, from Stalin's own speech and from further explanations of it given by one of his close associates, Rudzutak, that the Kremlin considers this country already entered upon a new period, the period of socialist construction ended and socialism definitely established. Rudzutak said this flatly in so many words, and Stalin's speech, six weeks earlier, may be regarded as marking the new period's inception. Seen in this light his speech, far from indicating a "backward" move or "rightward" swing, appears rather as a program of adaptation of national life to a new state of affairs, or in military terms "a consolidation of positions already won." In the circumstances it is probably more correct to accept this interpretation than to say, as some observers here do, that Stalin was recognizing the high-water mark of a revolutionary wave from which a certain degree of ebb had become inevitable—in accordance with Lenin's phrase about the progress of revolution in Russia being three steps forward and one step backward.

In the second place, there is nothing fundamentally "backward" in the improved conditions of salary, security, and living standards offered to Soviet engineers or in the greater facilities to individual production and sale of produce offered to peasants and homecraft artisans. Both these apparent concessions are in line with the Marxist principles of socialism as the Bolsheviki understand the word, which, Stalin was careful to point out, is quite different from communism. Socialism in its present Soviet sense is pretty much equivalent to state capitalism, under

which individual initiative and service are encouraged by the same rewards as in a capitalist society, with the important distinction that the service is performed for the state, not for private enterprise of any kind. In regard to the peasants, socialism allows them to profit by their own individual effort as long as the preparation and sale of their products do not involve the hired labor, or, as Russians call it, the exploitation, of others. The "new course," therefore, which Stalin's speech inaugurated, should be seen not as a backward step but as a regrouping of forces, to get the best results from the advances already made and to complete the socialist framework already constructed with a minimum of friction.



# STORY AND PROVERB REVEAL THE RUSSIAN

*(Sunday Magazine Article, July 5, 1931.)*

RUSSIANS have a proverb which they love to brandish before foreigners. "No mortal man," they say, "can measure mighty Russia with the compass of his tiny brain." If the visitor will conquer the annoyance these words produce, they become a revelation, the two keys to Bolshevism's success in Russia, namely, Slavic arrogance and Slavic fatalism.

Pre-war Russians professed to despise their country; they emphasized its "darkness," backwardness, and ignorance. Typical reaction to a "superiority complex," one might call it, for Russians really have terrific national arrogance, based on the size of their country and its limitless natural resources, and on some mystical sense, bred in them as in the Jews by centuries of persecution and oppression, that sometime or other their day would come, that, in short, they were the heirs of destiny.

The Tsars fiddled and muddled with their people's dream of glory, and took as real, perhaps, the Freudian assertions of the intellectuals that Russia was born in the mud and in the mud must live.

Then came Lenin, the first true Russian leader since Peter Romanov, called the Great. Lenin shared and used the national arrogance of the Slavs. (Do you know that the word Slav itself, in Russian, means "glorious"?) Lenin offered them the appeals of Moses and Jesus put together—"You are the chosen people, you shall go forth into the world and preach my gospel to every nation."

Here at last was the trumpet-call they had awaited, these Slavs, through centuries of fumbling Tsars; here was the new Messiah, leading them not to Istanbul or "warm-water ports,"

but to the "conquest of the world." Here was the note to thrill a "dark and backward" people, to overthrow the mighty and exalt the lowly, to obtain for the despised and rejected the inheritance of the earth. Slavic fatalism did the rest. "What will be, will be"; "Fate drives the strongest ox to slaughter"; "No man can outrun Destiny." These and a host of similar folk-sayings helped break down resistance to Lenin's creed.

Today, in the thirteenth year of the Bolshevik revolution, the active forces let loose by Lenin have not only conquered the passive apathy of fatalism but won it to their service. The iron will of Stalin and the orders of the Kremlin have replaced Fate and Destiny in the minds of Russia's masses.

This is no mean achievement, because the Russian peasant is more stubborn than the strongest ox and hardly more receptive to new ideas. Eight or nine years ago I suggested to Karl Radek, then a pride and pillar of Bolshevism, that the whole question came to this: whether the Bolsheviki would be able to satisfy the peasants with a socialist system before the peasants forced the Bolsheviki to restore a capitalist system. Radek spluttered and scoffed, and told me I had not been in Russia long enough to know anything about it. Poor Karl Radek, so amiable and intelligent, who wrecked his political career because his friend Trotsky suddenly decided in 1925 and 1926 that the peasants were winning the race I spoke of, and that it was all up with the Soviet state unless the most violent methods were immediately used against them!

Radek agreed, and Rakovsky, and after some delay Zinoviev and Kamenev and other great persons in Bolshevik history. (Or anyway they said they agreed, though perhaps their real motive was a common dislike of Stalin, who did not agree at all.) Stalin told them bluntly they were talking nonsense, that the race against the peasants had barely reached the penultimate lap, and they were crazy to start sprinting for the tape so far from home. Stalin, as usual, was right (though three years later

he showed the peasants what sprinting meant), and the logic of facts he had learned from Lenin, and the party machine he had built up for himself, enabled him to knock Trotsky, Rakovsky, Radek & Co. to Istanbul, Siberia, and points east.

A remarkable citizen, this Stalin, who never forgives nor forgets—and especially never forgives. Not brilliant nor talkative, but efficient. They tell a story about Stalin, to explain why he first came to dislike Trotsky, who was both talkative and brilliant.

It was during the civil war, and Trotsky, the great Red war lord, was holding a council at the front and had given orders to the sentry that no interruptions were permitted, on pain of death. Whereupon Stalin arrived from Petrograd as representative of the Bolshevik Supreme War Committee, and brushed the sentry aside, and told Trotsky and his council what the rear thought about the front. ("And never the twain shall meet," as the World War showed.)

Trotsky was incensed, but greeted Stalin affably. Then, when the council was over, Trotsky went out and had the sentry condemned to death for disobeying orders. The next day the local Red forces had a big parade, nominally to honor Stalin and the Petrograd War Committee, but actually to rub into the afore-said sentry and his comrades (whose ideas of discipline at that time were somewhat meager) what discipline meant. That is, when the parade was over, a firing squad appeared in the middle of the parade ground and sentence of death was loudly read over the unlucky sentry.

But, before Stalin could protest, Trotsky made a Napoleonic gesture. "I find," he said, "that the soldier in question has a magnificent record of courage and devotion in the ranks of the Red Army. He deserves death for disobedience to orders, because obedience, no matter what be the circumstances, is a soldier's first duty. However, in view of our comrade's record, I have decided to exercise the power conferred on me as Commis-

sar of War to rescind the verdict of the court martial and dismiss him with a warning to be more careful in future."

Assembled warriors roared applause, but Stalin went back to Petrograd with a sour report to Lenin about Trotsky's "aping the arrogance of a Tsarist general." "A general who wins battles," said Lenin, smiling, as did Lincoln to critics of Grant's whisky-drinking. But Stalin did not forget the episode or forgive it.

You may note, I said Petrograd, city of Peter, which of course was then its name, before Lenin died and they gave it his name instead. Most people seem to believe Peter the Great named the city after himself, but he did not. He christened it for St. Peter, his name saint, and it is rather curious that the late Tsar and Tsaritsa, who were religious to the verge of mania, should have permitted the name (and, as they might have seen it, the protection) of St. Peter to be replaced by that of a mortal (and on occasion most vicious) man.

But there was a doom over them from the first, those unlucky ones, from the tragedy that marked their coronation in Moscow, when there was a stampede that killed hundreds at the celebration on Khodinsky Field (now Moscow's airport, from which in October 1917 Red artillery smashed the White resistance in the Kremlin), to the ominous ruble piece struck in 1912 to commemorate the five-hundredth anniversary of Rurik, the first Tsar, which bore the heads of Rurik and Nicholas II side by side. "The first Tsar and the last," said those who could hear Rasputin's infernal "Whistle, and I'll come to you" bewitching the imperial family to destruction.<sup>1</sup>

About the name-changes of the former capital they tell one of the subversive "anecdotes" which have become the last refuge of the "old regime" in Russia.

A citizen employed in one of the Soviet bureaus was required

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (page 390) for a quotation from the Tsar's diary.

to fill up a questionnaire—age, place of birth, etc.—for one of the numerous “cleansings,” which periodically separate sheep from goats in the Socialist Fatherland. He did it as follows:

Age	32
Place of birth	St. Petersburg
Where educated	Petrograd
Present residence	Leningrad
Where do you wish to reside?	St. Petersburg

And was promptly “cleansed.”

Anyone who could make a full collection of these anecdotes would have the most wonderful history of the Soviet Republic ever written. Their number is unlimited, they are mostly witty, and topically apt. In a country where the press is hitched to the red star of Bolshevism, they replace the satirical sallies of *Life*, *Punch*, or *Simplicissimus*, or the pasquinades of an earlier period.

Unfortunately most of them require too much explanation for foreign taste, either because the circumstances are unfamiliar, or by involving a play on words in the Russian language.

One they tell nowadays about Stalin is not without merit, if you bear in mind that “self-criticism” is one of his latest slogans, issued for communist guidance. It is early in the forenoon, when suddenly from Stalin’s office in the Kremlin there echo sounds of strife.

“Who’s catching it now?” whisper his trembling secretaries in the anteroom.

“Rykov,” says someone. “No, Bukharin,” cries a second, “I just saw him go in.” Other names are mentioned as the row grows louder. “Call yourself a Marxist,” booms the big chief’s angry voice, “you poor fish, you blackguard, you ——” (the Russian language has an incredible richness of expletives) “why, you’re not fit to trim Marx’s beard.”

His bellow reaches such a climax of fury as I myself heard

in Clemenceau's office in *l'Homme Enchaîné*, in 1917, just before he became premier, when a terrified little man darted out, and the old "Tiger's" *chef de rédaction* muttered nervously, "He roars loud this morning."

But there is no sign of an escaping Rykov or Bukharin—only silence. Timidly one enters Stalin's office. He sits at his desk, red-faced, panting.

Subordinate peeps under the desk. Has Rykov (or Bukharin) been struck dead?

"What are you looking for?" cries Stalin crossly.

"I thought, c-c-comrade, that is, we heard, I mean, of course, you are magnificent in denouncing right opposition, however high-placed, b-b-but where is he?"

"Where is who?" snaps Stalin.

"The c-c-c-comrade you were—er—er—arguing with."

Stalin's eyes flash steel. "Don't you know," he says coldly, "the first duty of all good communists? I have just completed my daily twelve minutes of self-criticism."

There is another and older story, however, that is told of Stalin, which helps one to gauge the quality of the man and the strength that is in him. As a member of the Petrograd War Council, early in 1918, he was inspecting a bedraggled division of the Red Army. Suddenly Stalin halted before a soldier, who scowled back at him without saluting.

"What's the matter, comrade?" Stalin asked. "You can speak freely."

"Everything's wrong," the man grumbled, "no food, no rest, no cartridges, no——"

"The revolution demands sacrif—" Stalin began, but the soldier cut him short.

"It's easy for you to talk," he said. "You wear high boots in this frozen slush, but look at me, at all of us." And he thrust forward a foot wrapped in sodden sackcloth.

By way of answer the ruthless Stalin took his boots off, forced

them on the soldier, wrapped the man's damp rags around his own feet, and continued the review without a word, and refused to wear boots until Lenin ordered him to lest he catch pneumonia. I will not vouch for this story, any more than for the other about Trotsky and the sentry, though both were told to me by people who believed them.

And both are probable enough. Trotsky is at heart an "aristo," as they called them in the days of the French revolution, albeit of an intellectual rather than a social aristocracy. And Stalin must have something more than cold cunning and the manipulation of a political machine to explain his success.

Where Trotsky played the general, with Napoleon's genius for a popular gesture, Stalin felt kinship with misery. Cruel, of course, and fanatic and ruthless above all. But when the Bolshevik cause crashed in the bloody repression which followed the abortive revolution of 1905-1906, Stalin alone of the prominent Bolsheviks stuck the game out in Russia, while the others fled abroad. He spent years in jail, hiding under a dozen aliases, escaping and being recaptured, yet indomitable. Of him, indeed, it might be said: "The iron entered his soul." And it is perhaps no accident that of all the names he carried, Stalin, the Man of Steel, was the one which counted most.

## AN INTERVIEW WITH STALIN

Moscow, *December 1, 1930*.—Joseph Stalin is an outstanding world figure, yet of all national leaders he is the least known. He has talked with a few foreigners—the heads of visiting delegations; Colonel Hugh L. Cooper, the American consultant at Dnieperstroy, the huge hydroelectric project on the Dnieper river; back in 1923 he was interviewed by a German; and in 1924 and again recently by Japanese correspondents.

This month he has thrice broken his rule of silence, and has now given to the writer a comprehensive view of his opinions on world affairs, and afforded an opportunity for gauging the character and force within him that have carried him from a cobbler's hut to the Kremlin.

To this correspondent the spirit and personality of great men are generally far more interesting than what they say. It gnaws like a toothache to report Stalin's words before trying to picture the man himself.<sup>1</sup> But this is Stalin, Lenin's disciple and the leader of the communist movement in Russia and the whole world, and what he says comes first. Stalin said:

"The present world economic depression is very heavy and will be heavier yet. It is the worst of the periodic crises that mark the decay of the capitalist system, but I do not think it will last or that it is the culminating crisis.

"Capitalism is still strong and may recover, but this last year has exposed its fatal weakness—capitalism cannot exist without markets, and the mutual rivalry of capitalist states bars them from each other's markets. Thus the stronger states are forced to bring pressure upon the weak ones.

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Duranty's picture of "the man himself" consists of the article "Stalin: Man, Mouthpiece, Machine" *supra*.



"Some European countries suffer more from the present crisis than others, as a result of the World War. Some are smaller and more backward, and the stronger powers must seek an issue of their own difficulties at their expense. The breaking point will naturally come in the country least capable of resistance because every chain breaks at its weakest link."

Stalin spoke slowly, with a soft southern slur, phrase by phrase, economizing on word and gesture.

"Then you think a new war inevitable?" the writer asked.

"When, where, and on what pretext it will begin I cannot tell," Stalin replied, "but it is inevitable that the efforts of the stronger powers to overcome the economic crisis will force them to crush their weaker rivals. That does not necessarily mean war—not for the time being—until a later day, when the giant powers must fight for markets among themselves."

His voice was still quiet, but there was a vibration of energy in his tone. He paused for a moment, putting his fingertips together, then continued:

"It is a law of capitalist society that the strong must prey on the weak—'You are right if you are strong; if weak you are wrong!' And in many strong countries there are persons who see this clearly and wish to use the direct method—namely, war. Sometimes these wars take the form of 'colonial expansion' or 'expeditions,' but the aggressive spirit never dies.

"On the other hand, there are other elements in strong countries—more far-sighted men who calculate more cautiously and fear that war, especially a new war in Europe, would be too risky and would bring upon them greater loss than profit. They restrain the hotheads and there comes a sort of balance of forces between the two groups, the issue of which will be determined by circumstances.

"Both of them will readily crush a weak enemy if it could be done with little or no risk, but for the moment no such easy and profitable venture offers itself. They might have tried it

against the U.S.S.R. five or six years ago, but they waited too long. It is now too late."

Stalin hurled out the last words without raising his voice but with a sudden access of restrained power that had an impact like a blow. He resumed:

"You know the situation in Europe today—like an armed camp, with more money for armaments wrung each year from nations now half bankrupt, some of them as a result of the economic crisis. Things can't go on like that—the breaking point must come somewhere.

"Far-sighted elements everywhere are trying to call a halt, but they are powerless. Look at this Geneva conference—it demonstrates the unwillingness and impotence of the League of Nations to cope with the growing danger. Surely everyone must see that things can't go on like that."

"You mean," the writer asked, "that the status of Europe as established by the Versailles treaty cannot last?"

Stalin said:

"I don't think the Versailles settlement"—he paused—"can last long." Then he added emphatically:

"It cannot last."

"Suppose," I suggested, "that the anti-war elements you spoke of realize the danger and try to avert it by a world economic conference or similar means. What would be the attitude of the Soviet Union toward that?"

"There was the first economic conference," Stalin replied, "then small conferences of agrarian powers, and there is now talk of a bigger conference of world grain-producing states. If we are invited, I think this country would accept—we once sent Osinsky to one such meeting at Geneva."

"You see, then," the writer asked, "no reason why capitalist and communist systems should not exist side by side without fighting?"

"They have not fought for ten years," said Stalin dryly,

"which means they can co-exist. We don't want to fight and some of their people don't, either, and it is a fact that we 'put water in their mill.' There are numerous factors involved, you see—as whether war against us would pay and how great the risks would be. They know now we would fight them to the last man."

It is interesting to note that throughout the conversation Stalin showed no sign of doubt, weakness, or uncertainty about Russia itself. He looks forward and not backward, and he never even mentioned the present difficulties.

"All right," I said then, "take America. You don't want war and America doesn't want war. You are two of the biggest nations in the modern world. Why can't you get together and assert your will for peace?"

Stalin smiled somewhat sourly and said:

"America knows where we stand from Litvinov's declarations. We have done what we could, but we won't hang on their necks. We still are willing to do what I said before: get the debt question settled by the payment of an extra percentage on credits or a loan and resume normal relations, as we have done with the rest of the great powers.

"They know we can pay and do pay our debts and fulfill our pledges—it is up to them. An extra percentage—that is a mere trifle. A debt settlement with America—that is easy enough; it is a comparatively small matter anyway, but—there is something else."

He paused and repeated thoughtfully, as if puzzled:

"It is not debts that matter—there is something else."

The writer plunged in boldly:

"You mean 'Bolshevik propaganda,' or the 'arming-the-burglar' theory, and that, as many Americans say, 'Why help build up a country whose avowed aim is to overthrow our Constitution and upset everything which we believe made the greatness of the United States?'"

Stalin refused to be drawn out.

"They provide equipment and technical help, don't they?" he said rather sharply. "And we pay them, don't we, for everything—pay top prices, too, as you and they know. You might as well say we are arming Americans and helping to maintain their capitalist system against ours.

"No," he continued more softly, "that is nonsense. That isn't the point at all. All this talk of propaganda is ridiculous. Propaganda doesn't do anything" (he stressed the word heavily). "Constitutions and systems are changed by natural causes, not by talk or books."

"Acts, not words," said Foch and Clemenceau, "*Je fais la guerre*." Stalin's words recalled to me these words of two other supermen of recent history. Perhaps the insistence on facts rather than talk explains why Stalin hitherto has been so reticent.

"In the old days," Stalin continued, "the Tsars blamed the French or German socialists for importing socialism into Russia, forgetting that the conditions of life and not socialist propaganda determine the course of events. Now I suppose they are making the same mistake in the United States when they say we are re-exporting socialism to Europe."

"The re-exportation of a finished product," the writer broke in, "perfected by your experience and scientifically adapted to modern needs?"

"Not a bit of it," said Stalin impatiently. "Of course we Bolsheviks studied carefully the French, American, and German revolutions in the past, especially their most radical revolutionary wings, and learned from their experience how to overthrow the old regime. That was their real export of revolutionary methods.

"If you want to say we are sending back to the West its merchandise by re-exporting the practical experience of creating a socialist society, then you are right and I take it as a compli-

ment. And how do we do it? We show visiting foreigners and the whole world that socialist production is possible and is growing and will succeed.

“Whether they like it or not, socialist economics will develop and exist in turn for them to study. That is propaganda, too—but there is nothing to be done about it.”

## THE RUSSIAN LOOKS AT THE WORLD

(*Sunday Magazine Article, March 29, 1931.*)

IN writing of Russia the use of paradox is in order; so I begin my tale of the "average Russian" with the statement that there is no such person. In comparatively stable, compact, small countries like England or France, one can readily suppose a typical citizen, perhaps rather more intelligent and well informed about foreign affairs than a true average would allow, but on the whole sufficiently representative of the mass of his fellow-countrymen. In this vast, amorphous, fluid country, whose very name—Union of Socialist Soviet Republics—is deliberately vague and un-national, all old values were upset by the revolution, and the new society has not yet had time to "set."

There is, to begin with, a deep gulf between those who reached the thinking age before and those who reached it after the revolution. It is a commonplace to speak of the changed outlook upon life of the "post-war generation" of Europe, as compared with its elders. Yet the war did not fundamentally alter the structure of European society, whereas the Bolshevik revolution literally stood the old order of Russia upon its head. Its most cherished ideals—the belief in God, the importance of money and property, the sanctity of family ties, the respect due to rank and birth and authority—were shattered wholesale and in many cases replaced by their exact opposites. To the "average" older Russian this destruction spelled blasphemy. To the "average" youngster of today it means that a lot of obsolete rubbish has been swept onto the dust heap, as I have heard it said with pride.

Sir Philip Gibbs and M. Maurois (in their articles in the *Times*) found their average countrymen in what may be called

the ruling class, certainly the thinking class, of England and France. The ruling class of the U.S.S.R. is, of course, communist. But is one justified in proffering as "average" the representative of a class or sect or organization—call it what you will—that does not number more than ten percent of the total population?

I say ten percent, not one percent, advisedly, because the usual reckoning that communists number about 1,600,000 in a total population approximating 160,000,000 is wrong and misleading. Actually today there are more than 1,800,000 adult Communist party members, 3,000,000 members of the Communist League of Youth, 4,000,000 Communist "Young Pioneers," and an uncounted mass of babies, from the christening age up to kindergarten, whose parents have registered them more or less formally as "Octobryata," that is, potential or future communists. If the total national census is counted "by noses," irrespective of age or sex, it is only logical to reckon its communist proportion in the same way, although few people have ever done so.

At that, ten percent cannot be called a true "average," although what the ruling communists think is what matters most in present Russia, and must not therefore be omitted from any attempt to analyze contemporary Russian thought. Moreover—and this is highly important—there is no marked difference of viewpoint between older communists and their juniors, such as divides the non-communist population. Communists of any age are required to think, and try to think, and generally do think, alike.

But what of the "average peasant"—there are 140,000,000 peasants in the Soviet Union—and the manual worker, and the white-collar worker, and the "intelligentsia" (which means what the West would call professional men, including scientists and artists and actors and reporters)? How is their average to

be reckoned, and by what measure can their lump sentiment be weighed?

Three or four years ago it would have been futile to attempt a group analysis of these different sections of the Russian population. Three or four years hence it may be easier. At present it can be tried, with reservations, because, differ as they do, they have certain opinions in common.

They share, it may as well be admitted from the outset, a general doubt of the new and untried road along which the Kremlin is leading them. (If there is one thing that marks the truly "average" human being, all the world over, it is a dislike, or even fear, of anything novel. Habit has become for humanity a second nature.)

Russians well know—nearly all of them, save an incorrigibly romantic handful of the former ruling class and a larger, but numerically insignificant, section of obtusely conservative peasants—that the clock of life cannot be set backward, and that any attempt to restore the old order would be futile. Moreover—I say it with deep conviction—they do not want the old order restored, with its Tsars and popes and "Black Hundreds" and gendarmes and landlords. One might imagine they had proved that in the days of Denikin, and Kolchak, and Yudenich, and Wrangel. They do not want it and they will not have it.

But one may venture to question whether they want, on the other hand, to work so hard and eagerly for the "Five-Year Plan in Four Years" as the Soviet press would like us to believe. Or whether they thrill with enthusiasm at the thought of "socialist construction" and the slogan, "We must equal and surpass America." Or whether the suppression of small home-craft and peasant production of food and commodities—which played a far greater role in Russia's economic life than is generally realized, and is the cause of no small part of the present shortage from which they suffer greatly—is not distasteful to



them, like soap in the mouth instead of butter. Or, finally, whether they really enjoy being herded into collective farms (however more productive than their wretched little individual holdings, and however more truly contributing to their ultimate good), or being forced, if they belong to the urban population, to stand in line for hours to buy the necessities of life or secure them on a niggardly ration system through "closed distribution centers" in their factories or offices. The "average Russian" is a meek and long-suffering creature, but it cannot be denied that he is disturbed and distressed by the present violent change of his habits and life-ways.

The violent change of his habits disturbs and distresses the "average Russian"—it must be understood that I am now speaking of the non-communist Russian—to such a degree that he cannot voice his ideas, hopes, and aspirations with anything like the ease and clarity of his French and English brethren, as related by Messrs. Maurois and Gibbs. It may well be that in England and France, those compact, old settled states, there are quite a large number of low-class fellows, perhaps more than enough to form the real "average," who share with my poor Russian the acute and soul-searing anxieties about where the next meal will come from, and the next week's rent, and the baby's shoes. In Russia those are universal preoccupations, so near and urgent as to take men's minds off the larger problems of foreign or even home politics. The "average Russian" thinks first and most about food and clothing. The commodity shortage is so acute nowadays that what to eat and wear counts more than the fate of nations.

But the Russian, curiously enough, is a politically minded creature, much more so than the average American, to whom, taking it by and large, politics is a profession like other professions, run by (I should not like to say for) a more or less specified type of big-hearted citizen, who has studied to become a politician as others study to become a doctor or musician or

movie star. The Russian, however, though in reality more remote from politics, both domestic and foreign, than the average American (because the Communist party takes care of all that for him, as things now go here, and hardly bothers to suggest occasionally that he sign his name, here, on the dotted line) is deeply interested in politics and is easily excited by politicians, and is full of ideas—all Russians, even the humblest, are full of ideas—about politics.

So I am justified in supposing that the average Russian, despite his hard life and worry about food and the baby's shoes and his own boots and his wife's winter coat, has got something to say about the League of Nations and the treaty of Versailles, and disarmament, and the United States, and foreign affairs generally. Anyhow, he does say it and is stimulated thereto by the Soviet press, which gives a lot of space to world news as part of the education to which the Russian people is now being submitted by the Communist party.

He thinks—the average Russian thinks, or is being taught to think—that the League of Nations is a lot of high-sounding guff and nonsense, and soft jobs for "slick guys," and that it has just about as much influence on the course of events in Europe as a lot of old ladies at a sewing-bee, and that its practical purpose, if any, is to preserve the status quo in Europe for the benefit of the war victors, and finally that the Americans were mighty smart to keep out of it and its "entangling alliances." (The Soviet Union, if I may say so, is a large country, and seems to share George Washington's lack of esteem for picayune European dickerings.)

The Russian thinks the treaty of Versailles is a kind of messy patchwork that is already fraying at the edges, and he is a little worried—the average Russian, not the communist Russian—lest its imperfections involve him personally in some new great effort to make "Europe safe for democracy" or "fit for heroes to live in." In other words, a bigger and better war.

He thinks disarmament is a lot of hypocritical hokum. He thinks the United States is a sort of combination of the kingdom of Midas and the millennium, where people can pick up gold just anyhow and live happy and well fed and comfortable. He does not give a hang for Count Keyserling's suggestions that America has gained the whole world and lost its own soul. He has never heard of Count Keyserling and would not think much of him if he had. In fact, he would think Count Keyserling was crazy, because he, the average Russian, has learned by harsh experience that the welfare of the stomach comes before the welfare of the soul. He thinks, in short, that America is marvelous, and he sets America before him as his goal and landmark.

Instead of hyperbolic phrases about "lands for heroes to live in," the Russian thinks of making a country like America, where a poor man can own his automobile and readily enjoy a private bath. The average (non-communist) Russian immensely admires America and Americans, likes America and Americans, envies America and Americans, and hopes, with a great and, in the present circumstances, rather pathetic hope, that one fine day he will be able to live in the way he believes the average American lives now.

Such at least are the opinions—not only about America, but about the League of Nations and disarmament and the treaty of Versailles—of the Russian workers, employees, and intelligentsia. Just what the peasants think, if at all, of those remote matters is obscure, though one cannot say that their thoughts have no importance. Whatever they do think, if they do think, has importance by sheer weight of numbers. But for practical purposes one may surmise that they think much the same, on these points, as the workers, employees, and intelligentsia, who are closer in Soviet Russia to the peasants in life and thought than in any Western country.

Of Europe the Russian is doubtful. Germans, he thinks, are friendly, but he rather dislikes them. Poles, Finns, Rumanians,

and the inhabitants of the Baltic states he despises and distrusts. Of Italians he knows little, but he feels for them a certain age-old respect. Italian architects designed the Kremlin, and the name of Italy has always in Russia been synonymous with brain power and artistic skill. About the French he is muddled. He feels vaguely that they are fine people and ought to be friendly, although for some reason they are not. He does not like to think badly of them, and does so with regret, like an old friend that has been alienated by some stupid misunderstanding which should somehow be explained and corrected.

He does not like the Turks or Persians or Chinese or Afghans, and cannot quite understand why the government of Russia should worry about, or even be polite to, such inferior and barbarous folk. He has never forgiven the Japanese for the war of 1904, which he still regards as an unwarranted impertinence, repeated and exaggerated by their occupation of Vladivostok and the coast region in 1918-1921. They were forced to withdraw, he remembers with satisfaction, but that did not condone their insolence. This almost universal feeling about Japan is one of the more striking survivals from pre-revolutionary days.

Britain is still his traditional enemy, the stumbling-block in all his paths. Every setback or "narrow place" (meaning awkwardness or difficulty) in foreign affairs, from the flight of Borodin from China to the failure of the United States to recognize the Soviet Republic, is ascribed to British machinations. The British are a strong and crafty people, the Russian admits, and for that he respects them, but they are foes, he knows instinctively, most to be distrusted when they smile and speak smoothly. There may be truce, but no friendship, between the Lion and the Bear. It is rather significant that recent attempts by the Kremlin and the Soviet press to substitute France for Britain as the devil of popular Russian imagination have met with little success, and Britain retains her place as the enemy of (Russian) mankind.

Finally, which is interesting, the Russian is beginning to lose his traditional respect for the Western foreigner as a superior being, compared to whom he himself is a "dark" and backward creature. This is particularly noticeable among younger Russians who are being taught by the communists a self-respect and self-confidence their fathers never knew.

It is somewhat surprising that, although internationalism is one of the basic dogmas of the Bolshevik religion, the Soviet regime has thus far fostered the growth of Russian nationalism to no small extent. It is probably neither the Bolshevik's fault nor desire, but the inevitable consequence of the "outlaw" position in which this country was placed by foreign hostility. To a primitive people the subtleties of international brotherhood of the "workers and peasants of the world" are apt to be lost in a simple human dislike of enemies, who wish to bring back their hated masters or steal their land and make them a foreign "colony" like India or an "exploited nation" like China.

Circumstances—civil war and foreign intervention and the Polish war—tended to create a strong nationalist idea among the Russian masses, and the Bolsheviks, for their own purposes and in their perpetual dread of a fresh onslaught by the capitalist world, aided its development by defense-week campaigns and the Osoaviakhim movement and the most strenuous boosting of the Red Army and other forms of propaganda. Unfortunately, it cannot be denied that the average Russian, although still friendly and on the whole respectful toward the Western stranger within his gates, is becoming en masse more and more xenophobic and nationally arrogant. Which may have dire consequences in the future and already cannot be viewed without disquiet.

These opinions of the outer world held by the average non-communist are for the most part, as might be expected, a reflection of the views of the dominant Communist party. In part they are deliberately inspired by the communists; in part, espe-

cially as regards America and Japan, they are based on memories of the past and a kind of folklore or word of mouth legend of the present. The communist's own views, of course, are colored, if not primarily determined, by his "Marxist ideology," which presupposes that all capitalist systems are wrong and hateful and doomed to destruction.

The communist is ready to take the American technical system and material achievement as a model for the Russian people to "equal and surpass," as one of the popular slogans here puts it. But he is loath to admit that any good thing can come out of the capitalist Nazareth and is forced by ironclad Marxist faith to disapprove and disavow capitalism and all its works.

The communist's views are singularly hard-boiled and free from sentiment when it comes to the immediate practical consideration of any particular case. They should therefore be fairly correct on the whole, but the communist has certain fundamental prejudices which warp his judgment. He is hampered by two convictions—first, that the rest of the world hates and fears and wishes to destroy the communist regime in Russia; second, that the rest of the world for that reason is watching him like a hawk, eager to pounce, and is intensely interested in all his doings. Both these thoughts are in a sense unction to the communist's soul, but they keep him awake at night and frequently mislead him in the daytime.

## THE SECOND FIVE-YEAR PLAN

*(Sunday Magazine Article, April 17, 1932.)*

BEFORE attempting to compare the current Five-Year Plan of the U.S.S.R. (which really is only a four-and-a-quarter-year plan, because it began in October 1928, and is now scheduled to be "completed" at the end of 1932) with the new plan (January 1, 1933–December 31, 1937), it is necessary to make some explanations of the nature and purpose of the first plan, which do not seem to have been fully understood abroad.

In point of fact, the idea of a planned economy over a period of years was discussed in Moscow during Lenin's lifetime, and something that might almost be called a preliminary Five-Year Plan was conceived and applied during the years 1923–1928. That is to say, the very feature of the plan which particularly strikes foreigners—the attempt to organize the whole economic life of a great country beforehand over a considerable period, as contrasted with the custom in the capitalist world of allowing finance, industry, and business to solve their own problems independently and confine state planning to an annual budgetary system, itself limited to strictly governmental expenditure—this feature was not in principle new, and, indeed, corresponded to the known theories of a Marxist administration.

The years 1923–1928, however, were marked by two factors of great importance to the Soviet state. First, there were the controversies that raged inside the Communist party. Although in some degree these were the struggles of persons, they were no less a conflict of methods to be applied. Fundamentally, the opposing currents within the party were agreed on matter of principle: they all wanted to create and develop a successful proletarian state upon socialist foundations. Where disagree-

ment arose was over the question as to how this should be done, perhaps, even more, over the rate of speed.

The controversy was further complicated by the second factor characterizing this period, namely, the growth under Nep of private trade and petty industry in urban centers and of a prosperous section, one might almost say a "class," among the peasantry. It is true that, as American farmers understand it, the word "prosperous" is only relative, but the fact remains that by 1926 a large part of the "trade surplus" of the Soviet food production was in the hands of the kulaks, who had much of the typical conservatism of the farmer and, far from upholding socialism, were actually the supporters of private ownership in a form least easy to eradicate.

Accordingly, the first battles of the party controversy raged around the attempt by Trotsky and his supporters to force the Kremlin policy into an immediate drive against these kulaks, either by crushing taxation or direct appropriation. A parallel drive would meanwhile be conducted, the Trotskyists urged, against private trade and other enterprises in the cities and towns. Stalin and the majority of the party refused to be stampeded. They argued that it was rash and almost impossible to eliminate such important sections of the country's producers without having anything to take their place. More time must elapse, they said, before the state would be in a position to undertake the "liquidation" of Nep—that is, the replacement of private by state production.

By the autumn of 1927 the Trotskyists were defeated; whereupon the outer world was surprised to see the Kremlin proceeding to put into practice no small part of the Trotskyist program. The point being, of course, that time had duly elapsed and that the two or even three years occupied by the struggle with Trotsky had enabled the state considerably to strengthen its organization and the means at its disposal for the desired change from Nep to a more socialistic system.



It was, therefore, decided in the winter of 1927-1928 that the embryo or tentative program of Five-Year-Planned economy conceived in 1923 might now be put into effect as a full-fledged Five-Year Plan. Almost simultaneously began a fresh current of opposition inside the Communist party, directed this time by those who thought the rate of socialization should not be too rapid and who were still, no doubt, more influenced by their own arguments against the Trotskyists than by the accurate estimate of circumstances which Lenin had laid down as the essential guide for Bolshevik conduct.

True to Lenin's teaching, Stalin realized that circumstances had changed, that it was now possible to make "a mass offensive along the whole front," as he expressed it; that socialism, which had "retreated to jump further" under Lenin when Nep was introduced in 1921, could now make a further jump and must make it now or never. Stalin's victory in this controversy was the psychological genesis of the Five-Year Plan.

The plan then was to be, fundamentally, a means of socialization, not merely the socialization of industry and commerce—and of agriculture, a far more difficult problem—but a moral socialization as well. Curiously enough, the aspect of the plan most pertinently obvious to Americans during the last three years (that is, the regulation of production and consumption on a basis of nation-wide organization over a term of years) hardly presented itself to the Bolsheviks except, of course, as one of the principles of their Marxist creed. This is because in Soviet Russia at present there is no problem of consumption, or of the regulation of consumption as Americans see it, and there will be none for many years.

The problem or, at any rate, the present phase of the problem is uniquely one of production, which Soviet leaders have declared will not catch up with national consumption—that is, potential demand—in five years or even five times five.

No, that aspect is only a phase, at present a negligible phase.

What is more important now is the increase of production—that is, the increase of socialist production or, as it is called in agriculture, of collective production; and it is in this direction that the first Five-Year Plan was really aimed. But it is imperative to realize that behind this aim and above it lay another aim more important still—what I referred to as the “moral” socialization program.

To understand the Five-Year Plan and its relation to the U.S.S.R. today one must grasp the underlying fact that the Communist party regards itself in a sense as tutor and guardian of the Russian masses, who have not yet reached the stage where they are fit for independent self-government. I say “in a sense,” because from another angle the Communist party regards itself as the expression of the Russian people and as the representative quintessence of the people’s will. That, however, is a somewhat metaphysical conception, and for practical purposes it may be assumed that the party is indeed the guardian of the “infant” masses of its fellow-countrymen, whom it is training for adult life and citizenship. The form this training takes is the Five-Year Plan.

To explain what I mean, take the case, familiar to several million Americans, of army training, when they were forced by inflexible authority to do a whole lot of things which they had never done before, but which had been ordained by that authority with a definite and practical purpose. The fact that they were doing these things as volunteers of their own free will, or as drafted men against their will, ceased to have any importance once they began doing them. And such, one might say, is the case of a large number of Russia’s millions, not only men but women, not only those in the prime of life, but old and young.

Suppose, then, that a battalion of American recruits was being trained to build a bridge across the nearest creek. It might be that the bridge, if successfully built, would be allowed to

remain and have a permanent value for the local community. Or it might be that the bridge would be torn down, however well it was built, because it was not needed as a bridge although it was needed as training for new recruits. Now apply that illustration to the Soviet Five-Year Plan, with the logically unimportant difference that the idea of permanent benefit to the community comes first, or if it does not come first, has been principally emphasized both at home and abroad. In either case the parallel holds good—people who did not know how to build a bridge are being taught, and are building one. That is, I put my emphasis on the being taught, on the training value rather than on the result value; in other words, upon the moral effect and not the material. All Russia is being trained today by the Five-Year Plan, whether it volunteered for training or was drafted, whether it likes it or not.

Seen in this light the question of immediate results is no longer of primary importance. But it is far from negligible, because the Soviet "army" during its period of training has not a rich and powerful nation to feed and support it, as the American army had in the war. The "army" here is the nation itself and must at least produce sufficient results to maintain itself during the training period. Hitherto this has been done; in fact, it may even be claimed that the living standard of the Russian masses has on the whole been raised. The improved curve of vital statistics, infantile death rate and so forth, would seem to indicate that more positively than any argument or assertion.

That living standards could be greatly raised during the first four and one-quarter years (first Five-Year Plan) was scarcely probable, in view of the fact that most of the national energy and nearly three-quarters of the national income were being devoted to producing the means of production. This certainly is true as far as industry is concerned. In agriculture, whose purpose under the plan is the direct socialist production of food, one might have expected a definite improvement.

That it did not occur was due to the single bad mistake in Soviet calculations—the failure to foresee the slaughter of cattle on a grand scale which took place in 1928–1929 as an expression of peasant hostility to the “forced collectivization campaign,” which Stalin was so vigorously to denounce in the following year.<sup>1</sup> The slaughter of livestock not only greatly reduced available supplies of meat, milk, butter, and eggs during the following years but also affected the production of grain, vegetables, and technical cultures by the depletion of animal traction, which mechanical traction was not yet able to replace.

Another point of reproach that has been made against the Five-Year Plan was that it failed to take into account the volume of small private production and distribution of food and other articles of popular consumption. I have repeatedly emphasized this factor, and I believe that the Bolsheviks have underestimated its importance from the beginning. They have so erred in common with many bourgeois economists, both before and after the revolution.

My own opinion, based upon a careful study of pre-war conditions and a personal observation of the rapid improvement in living standards, not only in Moscow but throughout Russia, which followed the introduction of Nep, is that more than half the needs in food and goods of the pre-war Russian population was provided by small private enterprises, that is, by the individual producer, whether urban or kulak, whom the Five-Year Plan was intended to “liquidate” once and for all.

I think, too, that the Bolsheviks in 1928 underestimated this private production, both in historical retrospect of pre-war conditions, and at that moment. They reckoned it at, say, one-third of pre-war production rather than at one-half, and deduced therefrom that in 1928 it probably was only one-fourth or one-fifth, instead of one-third to one-half, as I maintain.

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<sup>1</sup> In his March 1930 speech on “Dizziness from Successes” (see Appendix, page 385).

Be that as it may, the fact remains that the first Five-Year Plan has given rise to commodity shortages of a widespread and vexatious nature due partly, no doubt, to defects of distribution (which in turn are due to the rapid suppression of private trade) but no less to the sharp decrease in private production. In the last year these difficulties have been somewhat alleviated in both directions. Production in the "socialist sector," as the Bolshheviki call it, has increased, and the establishment of "closed distribution centers" in factories and other enterprises has facilitated the process of supply. But no one familiar with the U.S.S.R. today can assert that the problem of commodity supply to the masses has yet been satisfactorily solved.

It is on this account that the idea of a difference or distinction between the two plans has arisen, to some extent in the U.S.S.R. itself, and commonly abroad; namely, that, whereas the first plan was chiefly to provide means of production and free the Soviet Union from industrial dependence upon foreign countries, the second is aimed principally at improving the living standards and comforts of the population.

I must confess that to some extent I made this mistake myself, which is not unnatural in view of present hardships and the stress laid by Soviet leaders at the recent party conference upon their hopes of improving living standards both this year and during the following five. But it is a mistake, nevertheless, because in reality there is no difference between the two plans, except of course the differences of time and increased volume of production. In other words, the second plan is essentially the same as the first, or, if you like, is a continuation of the first, on a bigger scale no doubt (because it adds to what had already been accomplished), but with precisely the same purpose, looking toward the same goal.

If one wishes to force a distinction, it may be said that the first plan was mainly a struggle against material difficulties, whereas the second will be faced chiefly by technical difficulties.

I mean that under the first plan it was a question of getting things built, of transporting things to places, of recruiting manpower and supplying it with food, clothing, and shelter—in short, of starting industry and agriculture to work on a nationwide socialist basis, of training the nation to that end, and, at least, supplying it with enough, during the training process, to keep it from discouragement or “deserting.”

Despite all errors and shortcomings, this has been accomplished so far, and with reasonable luck in the way of weather it is probable that living conditions will be so far improved by the end of this year as entirely to remove the danger of “desertion,” much less of revolt, in the future. In the second five years, however, there will come a new set of difficulties, many of which are already apparent.

It is one thing to build a modern factory on mass production lines, quite another to run it efficiently. If you are sending to market a farm wagon drawn by two horses, and one horse falls lame or the wagon sticks in the mud, you can generally get another horse or put your shoulder to the wheel and push. But if a complicated machine breaks down, it is not so easy to find precisely what is wrong, or, having found it, to get the machine running again immediately.

The same applies to the big new Soviet factories. When steel girders or lumber or cement were delayed by transport, they could set their men to work digging a ditch or doing something else that was needed; but when the supply of high-grade steel to an automobile factory is in default, production stops, with all that that implies. Hence the insistence laid by Stalin upon the importance of technical education, because the problem of the second Five-Year Plan is to keep the machine, built during the first five years, in smooth running order. That is, to know how and why mechanical defects occur and the right method of avoiding and correcting them, not just to push by sheer brute force.

## THE RESULTS OF THE FIRST FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Moscow, *January 9, 1933.*—Joseph Stalin's long-awaited speech, which was delivered Saturday before the leaders of the Communist party and published here today, proved to be a resolute justification of the Kremlin's policies and it contained the strong assertion that those policies would be continued.

M. Stalin said the speed of industrial growth and farm collectivization would be slowed in this and coming years, but his speech was "left" rather than "right" in character. At any rate, it stressed that there would be a strong policy toward full socialism, with no compromise with private capital anywhere.

After claiming great success for the Five-Year Plan, M. Stalin said it "will mobilize the revolutionary forces of the proletariat of all lands against capitalism." He argued that it had laid firm foundations for a new socialist order in the Soviet Union.

Save for a reference to a danger of war and repeated comparisons of Soviet growth and "capitalist ruin," M. Stalin did not allude to foreign affairs, and he left the questions of actual measures to be taken within the Soviet Union to his lieutenants, L. M. Kaganovich, a member of the Politburo, and Vyacheslav Molotov, the President of the Council of People's Commissars.

For the first time, M. Stalin clearly defined the meaning and purpose of the Five-Year Plan, as the Bolsheviki conceive it and its historic importance to the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and to the world. He declared the "plan had succeeded beyond the expectations of the most enthusiastic" and that 93.7 percent of the industrial program had been accomplished.

The 6.3 percent lag, he said, had been due to the "unwillingness of neighboring countries to conclude non-aggression pacts"

and to war danger generally, which had compelled the diversion of a number of factories to the needs of national defense.

Then the Soviet leader proceeded with an explanation of the purpose of the plan, the fundamental object of which, he said, had been to remove the contradiction between socialized industry—that is, the result of the urban proletarian revolution—and small peasant individualism, which had resulted from the peasant revolution involving the expulsion of the landlords and the division of the land.

M. Stalin asserted a successful socialist state was impossible unless this contradiction was removed and that such removal was possible only by establishing a solid industrial basis for big-scale, socialized agriculture. Otherwise, he continued, while socialist industry was destroying capitalism, individualist agriculture would be breeding capitalist elements.

“While small peasant individualism remained,” he said, “the danger of a capitalist restoration remained greatest. Therefore, it was the Soviet’s task to provide a self-sufficient industrial basis for collective agriculture at all costs and at the utmost speed, which meant the development of heavy industry and machine construction.”

To the questions, “Has the speed been too fast? Have the results been worth while? the sacrifices greater than anticipated?”—M. Stalin said firmly the Bolsheviki had known and discounted the costs beforehand and were not afraid of difficulties. The results had been fully worth while. The frantic tempo adopted had not only been right but absolutely necessary to meet possible attacks by enemies at home and abroad.

Had the speed not been thus rushed the Soviet Union might now be in the position of China, but, as it was, capitalism had been eliminated from industry and its foundations in agriculture destroyed.

Did this mean the same speed must be maintained in the second plan? No, he explained, because, first, a solid foundation



for industrial and rural socialism had already been laid; second, the national defense had been adequately strengthened, and, third, it was now paramount to master the new technique, the new factories, and the new methods, which could not be rushed in a burst of enthusiasm as in the building of the plants.

Thus he reckoned an annual increase of 13 to 14 percent in industrial production henceforth as sufficient, compared with 22 percent in the past four and a quarter years, but he said it was significant that the growth of 16 percent planned for 1933 was seven times greater in volume than the growth of 66 percent in 1925.

Analyzing the agricultural situation, M. Stalin said the problem of converting small individual farms into big socialized units had already been solved and that this had increased the quantity of grain mobilized in the hands of the government from 10,000,000 tons yearly to 22,000,000 tons.

There are now more than 200,000 collectives and 5000 state farms, including 60 percent of the peasants and 70 percent of the cultivated land, the area of which has increased 50,000,000 acres in the past four years.

This is an enormous advance, he asserted. He asked what would be said of a country that built 25,000 new factories in a year, adding that the U.S.S.R. had built far more than 25,000 great new collective grain factories annually.

It was argued by some that this was not a paying proposition, he continued, but a few years ago the same was true of half the textile plants, though that was no reason to abandon them; likewise with the Nizhni-Novgorod automobile plant and some metallurgical plants. It was a question of general national economy and of non-paying enterprises becoming paying with time and experience. The older collectives, he continued, had proved that beyond doubt.

The speaker asked whether it was right to rush the speed of collectivization. He answered that it was, in order to cut the

ground from under the kulaks and complete and utilize the nationalization of land, but that here, too, the tempo might be slowed in the future. What is most important now is organization, he insisted.

M. Stalin maintained that the material position of the workers and peasants had been greatly improved by the Five-Year Plan. It had abolished unemployment and insecurity among workers; it had abolished inequality between rich and poor peasants.

He cited the steady rise of wages and the increase in communal feeding and state insurance, and he made a biting reference to urban and rural conditions in capitalist countries. He stressed the developing socialized commerce and declared a goods supply in the hands of the state was better backing for the currency than gold.

But he omitted to point out the effect of the disproportion between supply and demand and its effect on the currency's purchasing power. He declared the Dnieperstroy hydroelectric plant and other "giants" were the answer to the charge that the Soviet Union did not have a solid currency.

The concluding part of the speech was devoted to a savage attack on sabotage and robbery by all sections of the "has-beens" and other counter-revolutionary elements who, seeing that their hopes of private property had been blasted, were now everywhere attacking public property in an effort of despairing revenge, which, M. Stalin said, would be pitilessly suppressed.

Some comrades, he said, failed to realize that class destruction, the Bolsheviki's aim, must come not by a slackening of state authority but by strengthening it and by the refusal of any form of compromise with class enemies, some of whom had wormed their way into the Communist party.

M. Stalin's final words contained the assertion that despite difficulties, the Five-Year Plan and the socialized system had definitely proved their superiority over decaying capitalism.



### III

## Collectivization



## RUSSIA'S PEASANT: HUB OF A VAST DRAMA

*(Sunday Magazine Article, February 5, 1933.)*

IN the lurid scenes of Russia's history her peasants have been a dark background, unknown yet ominous by sheer weight of numbers. From the Middle Ages, when Russia threw off the yoke of Tatar invaders only to begin another struggle against Western enemies, until the end of the nineteenth century the peasants played for the most part a passive role quite out of keeping with their numerical importance. On occasion, spurred by hunger and oppression beyond endurance, they rose like a devouring flood against foreign foe or native tyrant, as their prototypes had risen in the bloody Jacquerie of France during her Hundred Years' War with England. But save for these moments of frenzy they lived and died indifferent and unsharing in the red pageant of their country's history. Because they were slaves, little better than animals, tied to the soil and sold as part of it.

Even their emancipation from serfdom in the middle of the nineteenth century brought little practical change; the small scraps of land they were allowed to buy were so loaded with rents and charges, and their owners so handicapped by poverty and ignorance, that it was almost as difficult as before for an individual to rise from the slough of despond in which the whole peasant population seemed hopelessly bogged.

Prior to 1875 one cannot think of Russian peasants in terms of farmers as America has known farmers. They were not farmers at all in our sense of the word; they were scarcely farm-laborers—more like farm-cattle. They lived huddled in drab villages, sharing their huts with such livestock as they were lucky

enough to possess; pecking aimlessly at the land with tools, using methods so primitive as to maintain them near the edge of starvation unless seasonal conditions were unusually favorable; condemned by ignorance, poverty, and the apathy their existence engendered to a lifelong servitude.

With few exceptions they were slaves with all the faults of a servile mentality—truckling humility and bestial cruelty, treachery and avarice, hypocrisy, cowardice, and superstition. In the full meaning of Marx's phrase, they were the creatures of their environment.

When I speak of peasants it must be remembered that I mean peasants *en masse*, as a huge body forming more than four-fifths of the total population of Tsarist Russia. Among them, of course, especially in outlying regions, were communities descended from soldiers, free Cossacks, and Tatar nomads, or those bolder spirits who had chosen flight, banditry, and rebellion and lived to tell the tale. There were also settlements of foreigners, Germans, or Swedes, descended from religious exiles, or introduced by some Tsar to teach an industry in which he was interested.

These were ranked among the peasantry but were far above its average in the social, cultural, and material scale. There were not, however, enough of them, at least not in European Russia, to leaven the amorphous lump which Russian rulers, writers, and historians considered "the dark people," the poor benighted peasants. True, the genius of Tolstoy, that inspired madman, created toward the end of the nineteenth century a legend of the Russian peasant as unreal as Potemkin's feasting villagers 150 years before.

Tolstoy, outromancing the French romantics with their "noble savage," gave the world a picture of Ivan Ivanich, who loved God, his Little Father the Tsar, and his landlord with sincere affection, a devout, simple, honest, healthy, happy man. Tolstoy doubtless believed what he wrote, but there have been few

greater and more terrible lies in history, as history itself has shown.

It was not the love of God and the Tsar or respect for landlords which first began to raise the Russian peasant from his ancestral depths, but the harsh demand for labor of the materialistic industrial age which dawned in Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century—that and the compulsion of universal military service following the Crimean and Franco-German wars. Now at last Ivan Ivanich was released from his village prison, shown new sights and ways, perhaps taught fragments of useful knowledge, even though to his bewildered mind he was only exchanging the worse bondage of barracks or factory for the monotonous drudgery of peasant existence.

It is no mere accident that the demand for factory-fodder and cannon-fodder coincided with the release of the peasants from serfdom. No accident, either, that in this period there first appeared a figure whom the Bolsheviki have made world-famous—the kulak, the grasping “rich” peasant who squeezed his fellow-villagers in fingers harder than those of Tsar, landlord, or gendarme. The kulak was indeed the product of emancipation, the unconscious and, if he had but known it, the unwilling forerunner of another and greater emancipation.

During the period of serfdom a few rare individuals managed to rise above their peasant environment and become free citizens; others won liberty by flight and revolt. In both cases they left their villages behind them; in that stagnant atmosphere there could be drawn no breath of freedom. Now, however, there developed a steady flow of the strongest, most enterprising peasants, to industry and the army. Later, they returned to their villages and the land-owning instinct repressed by serfdom began to operate all the more fiercely because of that repression.

The kulak symbolized land-hunger in its sharpest form; he visualized for his poorer fellows the new aim that had replaced the bare struggle to live of previous centuries, the aim to own



land for one's self, to add acre to acre, to grow rich, or what peasants meant by rich.

That the growth of the kulaks as a class involved and developed intense individualism, narrow conservatism, and a corresponding eagerness to exploit the weakness of poorer peasants around them, has been so vociferously proclaimed by the Bolsheviks that one is apt to lose sight of two important facts. First, that the kulaks, who after all were not "rich" in reality but simply self-supporting small farmers, were not all villains and squeezers, but as years passed began to represent the typical hardworking yeoman class that has been regarded as the backbone of many Western nations—the development of farming in France since the French Revolution is an obvious case in point. Second, that, whether they were cruel squeezers or kindly helpful neighbors, they were the object of envy and emulation to all the poorer peasants in the country.

The abortive revolutionary movement of 1905–1906 marks a definite point in the rural development of Russia. It was not only an uprising of the new (but lately peasant) proletariat of the cities, but an expression of the land-hunger of the would-be kulaks, that is, the independent land-owning masses of the villages; and for every factory seized or looted by urban workers there were parallel attacks on châteaux and the seizure of landlords' property.

For the first time the mass of the Russian peasants saw a goal ahead of them, no longer a dim possibility as remote as heaven, but reasonably near, perhaps in their own lifetime: the appropriation and division of big estates and the achievement of self-maintenance by each family on its own farm.

Defenders of the old regime in Russia have argued that peasant ownership was already so extended by 1917 that the partition of large estates added comparatively little to the number or volume of small holdings. But the point they forgot is that rent and charges on these holdings were so great that their

owners, except the 4 or 5 percent of kulaks, were never self-supporting; that, in short, the mass of the peasants considered themselves cheated by the terms on which they had been allowed to own land since the emancipation; and that what they meant by their slogan of "land for the peasants" was ownership in fee simple—not just the addition of extra acres belonging to their masters.

And that, no less, was the program of the Social Revolutionary party, par excellence the peasant party in Russia, in the troubled summer of 1917.

The Bolsheviki have been pictured as riding to power on the joint demand for peace and land, but it is worth remembering that while they used both these and other methods of popular appeal, and did their utmost to hasten the process of disintegration in the army, their action in, and influence upon, the villages was relatively small. Their main effort was exerted upon the urban proletariat, by 1917 from half a generation to a generation and a half removed from village life; and it was in the urban centers that they won success.

For months before November 7 the peasants, led mainly by the Social Revolutionaries, had been driving passionately at their own goal of land expropriation, which grew steadily nearer as each accession of armed deserters from the army strengthened the hungry village and weakened the landlords' resistance. The Bolshevik revolution did little more than set the seal of fact and finality upon a process that was already near completion.

It may be said then that there were really two revolutions in November 1917—the Bolsheviki's seizure of power in the cities and towns; the peasants' seizure of land, with all that it implied in outright ownership, in the villages. The two movements were united and made possible by a third revolution, that of the soldiers, which for the first time put the balance of physical power in the hands of the Russian masses against their masters. The Bolsheviki did not lead or even initiate the peasant revo-

lution and were only partly responsible for the military revolution, but, by a stroke of courage and statecraft, they assumed leadership of both.

That lead they were able to hold by superior organization and the energy and character of their central committee or directorate, headed by Lenin, who knew well how utterly the individualistic land-grabbing of the peasants and the undisciplined desire of the soldiers differed from the Bolshevik aim of Marxist collectivism, but whose first purpose was to establish and insure the unity of the revolutionary cause and make clear the essential factor that in town and village and cantonment alike it was a revolt of the proletarian many against the possessing few, of the propertyless masses against the masters and owners.

Throughout the years of struggle that followed, the Bolsheviks never lost the hold thus gained, though at times it wavered under the strain of military necessity with its requisition of men, animals, and food. But—and this is a point of vital importance—neither the ultimate victory over counter-revolution nor the exigencies of militant communism during the fighting period removed, or indeed materially affected, the fundamental contradiction between the Bolsheviks' goal of Marxist collectivism or socialism and the peasant goal of full land-ownership, without rent or any charges except the minimum taxation required for the protection of that ownership, which spelled individualism in the highest degree.

That problem, as Lenin knew, was still to be solved, and on its solution depended the success or failure of the socialist experiment to which he and his associates had devoted their lives. Its urgency became at once apparent in the winter of 1920-1921, when for the first time the land had peace from civil and foreign war, and the peasants began to feel that the compulsion of military necessity had ceased to operate.

At that time the Bolshevik authority was fully established, the Red Army was a disciplined and coherent fighting force,

and the urban proletariat was conscious of its triumph and loyal to its communist vanguard; but four-fifths of the population still were peasants, each holding jealously to the scraps of land they now felt they owned, most of them sharply resentful toward the food requisitions imposed by a war which had touched few of them directly, as it was fought chiefly along the scanty lines of national communication. To them now, as always, it seemed the government and the townsfolk were their enemies, demanding much and giving little. The Bolsheviki and the cities shouted victory, but the peasant idea of victory was different.

At this point it is necessary to make a brief explanation. There was, of course, no clear-cut distinction between the peasantry and the urban proletariat; the time-distance separating them—two generations at the utmost—was too short for that. What is more, the Red Army, still chiefly drawn from peasant sources, was a link of real value. But the differences were profound, nevertheless—differences of habit and outlook, differences of knowledge, and, above all, the difference of aim.

The peasants as a mass were still backward, dirty, ignorant, superstitious, conservative in the sense of hating the new and wanting to hold what they had got, and intensely individualistic. Though many among them were kindly, hard-working, and simple, they were still, as a whole, a slavish folk, timid and suspicious, incapable of self-government or useful co-operation. For centuries they had cowered beneath the whip, and now the whip was broken. They were the people of Russia, they had been told, and who should hold or bind them? Surely not the handful of Bolsheviki, decimated by bitter struggle; not the numerical minority of city workers, exhausted and well-nigh starving? Not even the Red Army, whose soldiers were their brothers. "The war was over, was it? Now let us see about taxes and requisitions!"

The spring of 1921 had hardly melted the winter snows be-

fore the clash came. The peasant revolt against militant communism burst forth in the Kronstadt mutiny and a flat refusal in Tambov Province to accept the practice of requisitions. The mutiny was crushed by superior forces from Petrograd, but the Tambov movement spread like a prairie fire. The Red Army refused to fire upon the rebels, and in Tambov some divisions made common cause with their "peasant brothers."

Lenin acted with characteristic flair for the facts of the situation. He rushed through the Communist Party Congress in March a decree abolishing requisitions as such and allowing "free trade" in the villages; then he spent the next four months in convincing his followers that the time was not ripe for a struggle with peasant individualism; that the kulak spirit and ideal was still too strong and prevalent, that communism must retreat all along the line. In August his theories were embodied in the New Economic Policy, which restored private capitalism as far as the peasants were concerned, although keeping the control of finance, foreign trade, heavy industry, and transport in the hands of the state. The clash had come, indeed, between socialism and individualism, and the peasants had won the first round.

But, said Lenin, the Bolsheviki had not abandoned the struggle, though some of them for a moment doubted him, and though a host of profiteers sprang up to reap rich if short-lived gains from private trading. The peasants, he said, were not enemies of the Bolshevik regime, but they were the most backward and ignorant section of the population, who must be taught slowly and carefully, encouraged to develop and realize the benefits of their own co-operative system, and led toward socialism by the use of machinery and the example of workers in the towns and cities.

It would be a long job, Lenin said, because the peasants had suffered much and were far behind the townsfolk in social consciousness; because the lesson of militant communism had

been too severe and sudden, it was natural the peasants could not understand why their produce was taken and they received only promises in return. "Give them tractors," said Lenin, "and schools and doctors and teachers, new tools and new methods; then they will change their old ways and leave the kulak to follow us."

So the peasants were left for a while to their individualism, and Nep flourished and then faded as the Communist party grew in strength and numbers and the urban proletariat learned with difficulty to run its factories and build new ones, to operate mines and railroads, to handle commerce and finance. And Lenin died and his followers began to dispute about the peasants, some saying that the kulaks were too fat and growing fatter, that they must be checked immediately lest gradually they should become all-powerful in the villages.

But Stalin bided his time and waited until the state farms were producing as much surplus grain as the kulaks themselves and were equipped with tractors, and other tractors were being produced in series in Soviet factories.

Meanwhile every device of teaching and propaganda was brought to bear upon the peasants, especially the younger ones; a flood of light was being thrown into the darkness of ignorance and superstition. The kulak influence was being slowly undermined.

In the autumn of 1928 the newly adopted Five-Year Plan began a new campaign to win the peasants to socialism, to convince them that collective farming was easier and more productive as well as socially more equitable than individualism. The kulaks were shown as oppressors, not as worthy examples, and their homes and fields were offered as the basis and nucleus for collective farms, which henceforth should be worked by Soviet tractors and machinery and sown with cleansed and tested seed from Soviet farms.

The kulaks and their faction resisted bitterly. There was

bloodshed and arson, destruction of property and much killing of cattle, but the collective idea gained ground while the Five-Year Plan as a whole proved successful beyond expectation. Then in the summer of 1929 some of the younger communists grew dizzy, as Stalin said, and thought it was all over but the shouting. The peasants were forced en masse into the collective farms; their livestock and tools, their surplus clothing even, were pooled in a common stock. Once more they rebelled, not openly this time but by passive sabotage and boycott, by killing their animals and refusing to work.<sup>1</sup>

In March 1930 Stalin saw the danger and called a halt, but much damage had been done, much of the food potentialities had been destroyed, much ill will engendered. Perhaps, too, the time for hesitancy was past: it was wiser, despite losses, to rush collectivization through in one great movement. At any rate, that was what happened, in 1931-32, after a short breathing space in 1930. By the summer of 1932, 60 percent of the peasant holdings and 80 percent of the cultivated land were listed in the "socialized sector," as it was called. Collectivization, it seemed, had triumphed, and the true rural revolution, the socialist rural revolution, had come at last.

The cost has been heavy and its tale is not yet fully told, but the Bolsheviki appear confident that it was worth while, and that the victory of socialism is real and lasting. "There is bound," they say, "to be a period of confusion before the new system works smoothly. That occurred in industry and other branches of national life, and our peasants are still more backward than our workers. But we are sure to win, for youth and initiative are on our side." I am inclined to think they are right, in the long run, but it will not be easy.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (page 392) on the "Definition of a Kulak."

## THE CRISIS IN THE SOCIALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

Moscow, *November 24, 1932*.—The Soviet program of socialization and industrialization, known as the Five-Year Plan, has run against an unexpected obstacle—the great and growing food shortage in town and country alike. It is as if a huge machine, constructed with incredible effort, had begun to function, not perhaps with full efficiency, but far better than any save the most optimistic of its builders expected, only to confront the danger that the fuel supply that drove it suddenly had begun to fail.

Two-thirds of the Soviet population will be lucky if it gets more than bread, potatoes, and cabbage this winter as a regular diet, with fish three times a week, say, and meat perhaps once a week. And that in quantities below the people's wants and probably below their needs. There is no famine or actual starvation, nor is there likely to be. And, for the most part, all will share alike in the various localities. But it is a gloomy picture, and as far as the writer can see, there is small sign or hope of improvement in the near future.

The end of the year brings to a conclusion the first Five-Year Plan and should mark the inception of a yet more grandiose project known as the second Five-Year Plan. In point of fact, both "plans" are a single continuous program which, however successful, will be prolonged indefinitely, but which are subdivided into five-year periods for convenience and to provide a slogan for public understanding and stimulus.

On the face of things today, the first plan has done well enough. Without plunging into a set of complicated and frequently altered figures, it may be said that from 60 to 80 per cent of the industrial program has been accomplished—in the



case of the oil industry, nearly 100 percent—which is a surprising result considering the difficulties, and the whole vast territory of the Soviet Union is dotted with new mines and factories.

Hundreds of processes hitherto unknown in Russia have been introduced and hundreds of products manufactured, and the country has made huge strides toward economic independence. In education, both ordinary and technical, the progress has been universal and, quantitatively, far surpasses the program.

In agriculture, at first sight, the success is the most startling of all. Instead of a third of the peasant holding being socialized and converted from the obsolete strip-system to big-scale modern methods by the end of 1933, as originally planned, more than two-thirds of the peasant holdings and four-fifths of the total cultivated area had been thus socialized and converted by the middle of this year.

In a world of crashing fortunes, idle factories, and mounting unemployment, the U.S.S.R. has seemed a favored oasis of organized energy and enthusiasm, where there is not only work for all but an actual shortage of labor. The national resources of the country are so great and the program is so stupendous that five times the Five-Year Plan and twice the population did not seem excessive.

Perhaps it is the very size that has proved fallacious. Perhaps it is the very enthusiasm. Perhaps it is a defect in the planning. Perhaps it is the fault of the Soviet system or of causes outside Soviet control. These questions will be reviewed in later dispatches. For the present it is enough to state the actual facts.

First, there is no talk in Moscow today of a mightier second plan, the astronomical figures of which would burst on the world like a comet in the early summer of 1933. At best it is said that 1933 will be a "year of consolidation and adjustment"—in other words, an attempt to keep the program going, to finish

the works and buildings begun but not completed, to run smoothly and efficiently what now runs clumsily by fits and starts, and to hold what has been won.

It is simple enough, apparently, because the machine is built. It exists and works and those who run it gain experience each day. But the fuel is failing. The nation is short of food and the effects of that shortage are becoming ever graver and more evident.

Another dispatch will treat of the measures being taken to remedy the situation and will discuss the prospects. For the present the facts are these:

The national livestock supply is 40 or at most 50 percent of the total of five years ago. Cattle and horses total 60 or at most 70 percent of the total of five years ago, with a large proportion herded on state farms or on the larger collectives, where, by a recent admission of the government press, stabling and fodder for the winter are not yet half provided.

Half of the milk animals on many of these farms have gone dry by the same admission and the death rate among them is excessive, especially among the young. It is no exaggeration to say that two-thirds of the draft animals in the Soviet Union are already undernourished with a corresponding effect upon agriculture, for which they still supply four-fifths of the traction. The crops harvested this year will average 20 to 30 percent below last year in consequence of this, and there is corresponding human discouragement and lowered standards.

The majority of the peasants no longer get meat, sugar, cheese, butter, milk, eggs, and tea, save at rare intervals and in small quantities. The same applies to the smaller towns, construction camps, and similar works, but the large urban and industrial centers are fairly well and cheaply supplied by factory and other communal restaurants, closed distributing stores, and co-operatives, although the open shops and markets provide

little save small quantities of poor quality meat, vegetables, apples, butter, and fish at prices exorbitant in relation to the average wages.

Moscow, *November 25, 1932*.—What are the reasons for the food shortage that is menacing the Soviet program at the end of the first period of its planned economy, which otherwise is outwardly successful?

The food shortage and reduced living standards have impelled peasants by the millions to leave the villages for the towns and construction camps. That is why the newspaper *Economic Life* states editorially, "On scores and hundreds of collective farms of the North Caucasus, part of the harvest is unreaped, and grain has been left to rot in the fields."

The food shortage also accounts for the fact that the labor turnover in industry amounts to 100 to 200 percent annually, as the newspaper *Pravda* states, and for the fact that shops and markets are wellnigh empty while wholesale food-pilfering is denounced as a public danger.

Critics inside and outside of the Soviet Union have argued that the Bolshevik program was too ambitious at the outset, and that it was overspurred by enthusiasm after the first eighteen months, which succeeded beyond expectations. The result actually achieved contradicts this, and the Kremlin, knowing its people, doubtless acted wisely in setting the mark to aim at higher than could be attained.

Organic defects in planning doubtless existed, but they are not serious enough to afford an explanation of the present situation. More valid is the theory one sometimes hears from foreigners in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics that Marxian socialism was conceived as a doctrine to follow capitalism, to solve the problem of the adjustment of production and consumption,

and to effect balanced economic distribution, which is the weakness of capitalism today.

They deduce the paradox that socialism, if it could be introduced without too much breakage, might solve the difficulties of a developed country like the United States, where production and the technique of utilizing natural resources have been mastered, but that socialism is unsuited to an undeveloped country like the U.S.S.R., whose problems, like those of the United States in the past century, demand personal incentive and an individual pioneering spirit during the development period.

One may also mention lack of capital and foreign investments, but none of these reasons explains why a country where food was plentiful five years ago is now so short of food, despite favorable climatic conditions during the whole harvest period with few exceptions. No, the cause goes deeper.

The food shortage must be regarded as a result of peasant resistance to rural socialization, or, perhaps, more accurately, as a result of the measures taken to overcome that resistance. The measures have proved effective and the resistance has been overcome—the operation was successful but it left the patient low.

It is of little use today to discuss how far the “dizziness” from the first eighteen months of success—the dizziness that Joseph Stalin denounced in March 1930—set the Bolsheviki in a headlong drive to socialize the villages and demolish the Nepmen, thus contributing to the present situation.

Of little use, too, is it to suggest that a slow siege of the Nepmen’s position by state and co-operative enterprise, paralleled by the gradual spread of the collective farm movement, as the Five-Year Plan originally proposed, would have been a wiser policy.

Perhaps the Bolsheviki were right in delivering a storm attack

on the whole front of their opponents and in believing that the traditional peasant conservatism would be conquered only by closing the markets and suppressing private traders to deprive them of the advantages of individual holdings. Perhaps, too, the central authorities underestimated the effects of abuse or misuse of their instructions by local leaders, failed to foresee the extent of the muddle and confusion, and placed too high hopes in the management of the new collectives or on the readiness of the peasant masses to realize the benefits of co-operation and the new system.

In any event, the authorities drove full steam ahead, and food production dwindled as the peasants killed their livestock and abandoned the production of surplus foodstuffs.

Looking back, it may be said the Kremlin probably estimated the losses well enough, but thought the gains would outweigh them and reckoned there would be some shortage for two or three years, but not so bad as to matter seriously.

Two extraneous factors upset their calculations. First, the fall of world prices, owing to the depression, which forced the Soviet Union to increase the exportation of foodstuffs at a time when the shoe was beginning to pinch and when the distribution of that food at home would have corrected many difficulties. Second, the Japanese war threat, which put new pressure on the same tender spot by forcing the accumulation of foodstuffs for men and animals of the Far-Eastern army.

The balance, that had been delicate enough at best, could not be maintained, and the food supply became involved in a vicious circle, each difficulty breeding others.

It is a mistake to exaggerate the gravity of the situation. The Russians have tightened their belts before to a far greater extent than is likely to be needed this winter. If there is no international disturbance to complicate matters, remedies doubtless will be found, and the Soviet program, though menaced and perhaps retarded, will not be seriously affected.

## The Crisis in the Socialization of Agriculture 281

Moscow, *November 26, 1932*.—An interesting illustration of the function of the Soviet press as the mouthpiece of the government is given by its treatment of the present food shortage.

There is no attempt to deny the shortage or minimize its effects, but the press begins by taking for granted the official thesis, first, that the shortage is a natural—one might almost say, inevitable—accompaniment of the sweeping changes in the agrarian system involved by collectivization and therefore is only temporary in character and will be remedied when the new system gets running smoothly.

Second, the press holds that the shortage is due to mismanagement and imperfect administration, which can and will be corrected. There is no suggestion of errors of policy to blame or that a less vigorous pushing of the collectivization campaign might have avoided the present difficulties. That would be criticism of the "party line," which is utterly taboo, unless the line changes, and, anyway, it is not the Bolshevik habit to cry over spilled milk.

Instead, much of the blame is thrown on class enemies, such as kulaks in the villages and speculators in the towns, whose hostility, machinations, and sabotage have upset the program and who, by taking advantage of the aforesaid weakness in management and organization, reduce food production and hamper distribution.

In a similar manner shirkers and floaters are blamed for shortcomings in the industrial program. This is a convenient method and has the merit of considerable justification. It provides the masses with a scapegoat for resentment and allows the adoption of stern measures.

That kulaks—meaning not only the richer labor-employing peasants but the poorer farmers opposed to collectivization—still exist and are trying their utmost to retard the socialization process is as true as the fact that speculators are trying to turn the distribution difficulties to their own profit. It is also true

that there has grown up a class of almost professional shirkers, who flit from factory to factory collecting food and clothing tickets and dislocating labor discipline with no return in honest toil.

The public is taught to know and recognize all three "class enemies" and to welcome action against them. On the other hand, the press, while mercilessly exposing the defects in the present system, is careful never to suggest that a different system—that is, the previous system—might be better.

The press concentrates public attention upon defects and ways to improve them, upon enemies and ways to defeat them, but it rigidly excludes the implication that there is anything wrong with the system itself.

For instance, a newspaper will trace a carload of shoes from the factory to the village consumer or a carload of potatoes from the field to the consumer in Moscow. Finished shoes wait two to five days at the factory for transportation to the central station of the shoe trust. There the central organization of the rural supply co-operative files an order, and after more delay the shoes are moved to the central co-operative station.

After this delay the carload of, say, ten tons is allotted to the regional supply co-operative, which takes time to get it to the railroad station. Then begins a fight for the freight car, which ultimately reaches a country town fifty miles, say, from Moscow a month to six weeks after the shoes were produced.

Hitherto there had been little worse than bureaucratic red tape, but now other influences are beginning to operate. Cases "disappear" from shipments either at the local freight station or in the co-operative warehouse. Fresh delays precede an allotment of shoes to a village co-operative because there are five villages all with equal need and claims to that one carload and all want the country town co-operative to provide transportation. Finally, each village gets about one ton of shoes.

The other five tons are partly stolen and partly diverted en

route to country and town co-operatives. The whole process requires about two months.

Its counterpart gives a picture of a potato shipment, with the difference that pilfering and diversion occur at the beginning instead of at the end of the process and that foodstuffs spoil far more easily than shoes.

In short, the huge bureaucratic machine works clumsily with a disastrous lack of care and efficiency in the smallest units. A shrewd private dealer would manage somehow—did manage in the early days of Nep twelve years ago—to get shoes to the village and potatoes to the city with a twentieth of the delay or loss, because to him or his agents each operation, however small, was a matter of interest and profit. To a huge bureaucracy it isn't, and that is the trouble.

Moscow, *November 27, 1932*.—The most surprising thing about the food shortage is that, although Soviet spokesmen and press are not in the least trying to minimize its gravity, its widespread character and its harmful effects, they do not seem much alarmed by it.

Apparently they are confident that the situation will be remedied by administrative action and a gradual improvement without a material change of policy or what from the Bolshevik standpoint would be a backward step. True, there were signs of hesitations in the summer and for a while a "zigzag" seemed likely.

There was also an opposition movement within the Communist party demanding what would be equivalent to a restoration of the Nep, but it was quickly suppressed, apparently without difficulty. The authorities evidently believe mismanagement is at the bottom of much of the trouble and that the measures now being taken to discipline and improve the efficiency of local organizations will produce the desired result.



They seemed convinced, too, judging by the newspapers, that the food supply is greater than appearances indicate and that better management and distribution will ease the situation everywhere. The Russians are somewhat inclined to whistle to keep their courage up and shout loudest when about to yield, but there is no indication yet that the Kremlin thinks its earlier policy erroneous or intends to abate one jot of the ground that socialization has won.

Moscow, November 28, 1932.—Powerful justification of the Soviet agrarian policy is afforded by two news items in yesterday's press. The first reveals that the German Autonomous Republic on the Lower Volga has completed its state grain collections nearly two months ahead of the appointed date, the second, that a number of collective farms in the North Caucasus will receive prizes for the same achievement.

Yet in the Lower Volga region and the North Caucasus as a whole collections are badly lagging. The same exceptions appear in the Ukraine and other backward areas, which inspires the newspaper *Pravda* to take the matter up in its leading editorial, which in the present circumstances is equivalent to an authoritative declaration of policy, as the *Pravda* is the organ of the Communist party.

The Soviet press has made no secret of the food shortage and its effects. There is no need of a foreign observer to tour the villages, where it commonly happens that disgruntled or disaffected elements talk loudest while others are busy working. The speeches of Soviet leaders like M. Khatayevich, secretary of the central committee of the Ukrainian Communist party, and newspaper reports give an unmistakable picture. It is for this reason that the *Pravda's* conclusions are so important.

Under the caption, "The Quality of the Party Management Is Decisive," the *Pravda* emphasizes that the mere fact that a

majority of the peasants are collectivized is not sufficient for the success of rural socialization, that there is a long struggle ahead to extirpate the remnant of petit bourgeois, individualist mentality, that local party leaders in many cases have not realized this, and that their failure is responsible for much of the present difficulty.

If proof of this were needed it is furnished by a report in the newspaper *Izvestia* from the North Caucasus showing how one wheat sector last year was leading in socialization but this year had deteriorated simply because it had rested on its laurels, giving anti-socialist elements a breathing space. The *Pravda's* thesis may be summarized thus:

As Joseph Stalin has said, the difficulties that exist will exist, but they are difficulties of progress and growth. The first stage of what might be called the physical conversion of agriculture to socialization has been successfully accomplished, but the moral conversion is incomplete and it is here that the party management in some quarters has shown weakness.

In other words, there is nothing wrong with the agrarian policy as such—it has fully justified itself where it has been carried on properly except for defects and difficulties due to a laissez-faire attitude or compromise with opponents because of lack of support or allies.

This, in the writer's opinion, is essentially correct. Throughout the country there is a vast moral struggle between the enthusiasts for the new way, which is hard and thorny because new and unsmoothed by time and experience, and the advocates of the familiar system—a struggle between the socialist innovators and the individualist conservatives, between the young and the old. Especially is this true in the villages.

In the towns and construction camps—that is, in industry—socialism is winning hands down, but the very extent of its victory has injured the socialist cause in the villages by drawing away 8,000,000 peasants, mostly young men and women, in the

past five years. Had they stayed they would have been the rural vanguard of socialism, for youth everywhere is on the Bolshevik side, which will ultimately prove a decisive factor, no matter what temporary setbacks occur in their absence.

Their absence is quite noticeable in many villages where the populace seems only children or oldish people, and this situation has helped to give a momentary impetus to the reactionary forces and has led to such cases as that which occurred near Sverdlovsk, where two members of the Young Pioneers were murdered at the instigation of an older kulak group because they had championed socialization too fearlessly.

Time and enthusiasm are on the Bolshevik side, and if the Communist party leadership has rested on its laurels in certain areas there are many others—the North and Middle Volga, Black Earth and Ural Regions, West and Central Siberia, and the majority of the North Central Provinces—where grain collections are equal to or ahead of the schedule.

Autumn sowing has almost caught up with last year's levels. The potato supply of Moscow and Leningrad is 90 percent completed.

That it is a critical period no one denies, but crises have been perennial in Soviet history and many have been far graver than this.

Moscow, *November 29, 1932*.—The key to an understanding of the present situation in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics is the fact that the Bolsheviks have never wavered from the outset in their resolve to establish a Marxian socialist state in Russia.

To that aim Lenin and his followers have given their lives with a passion of self-devotion no purely political party has ever shown before them, facing prison, exile, and death in the pre-revolutionary days with the same steadfast courage as they

have met countless difficulties since they won power in 1917. The whole Soviet history is one of storms and the emergencies of battles, of expedients and sacrifices, but throughout it runs the same red cord of purpose, the iron determination to spare no effort and face any danger or hardship to attain their goal.

Upon that purpose the Communist party has been and remains united, and its bitterest internal controversies have been confined to how and when, but never what and why. The Bolsheviks have differed about the rate and method of progress, about direction and means of policy, but all of them from the first Baku opposition to the recent advocates of the restoration of the New Economic Policy have agreed about its ends.

They are as solidly set on building socialism as France, Great Britain, and the United States were on winning the war. Indeed, they visualize themselves as soldiers in a cause far nobler than the conquest of a foreign enemy and, like soldiers, they care little for ease or comfort in comparison with the cause for which they are fighting.

That is the explanation of the Soviet attitude toward the present difficulties. It is not a question of whether the food shortage involves hardship any more than the warring nations were deterred by lives lost in the trenches. What matters here today is whether the shortage and its effects are hampering the national purpose and, if so, what remedies must be applied.

In a previous dispatch I gave an instance of bureaucratic methods in the Soviet distribution of food and goods, and I stated a private trader would have accomplished the deliveries with a twentieth of the delay and loss. The Bolsheviks do not deny this—in fact, every instance that the writer cited came straight from the columns of the newspaper *Pravda*, which freely admits the shortcomings in socialized distribution in its present stage.

But the point is that the Bolsheviks fundamentally believe that private trade and all it implies are a cause of human un-

happiness, of inequality, of wars and national hatreds, of oppression and injustice against class, creed, and color. They mean to smash private trade and all it implies and to replace self-interest by public interest.

For that their best and bravest risked liberty and life. Why now should they fear hardship or choose the easier way? As matters now stand, socialism has won a victory in the past four years comparable to the victory in the civil war and intervention of twelve years ago.

Now as then the cost is great and the strain prodigious, but there the parallel ends, for in every field of endeavor the Soviet Union is now vastly superior and even the food shortage is insignificant as compared with conditions in 1920. Unless an outer disturbance interferes, the Kremlin is confident—and the writer believes rightly—that the measures now being taken will overcome the difficulties without a change of policy or a temporary retreat, but the state of world affairs is such that the Soviet leaders must reckon with the danger of interference.<sup>1</sup>

In any case one thing is certain—they will not lose sight of their essential purpose, for which, despite hardship and discouragement, shortage and grumbling, they have the backing of the Russian masses.

<sup>1</sup> Viz., from Japan.

## THE CAUSES OF THE CRISIS BECOME KNOWN

Moscow, *January 7, 1933*.—What the coming “purging” of the Communist party will be like is illustrated by a cross-section—cutting fiercely deep—of the purging already made in rural districts of North Caucasus. These results are published today in the newspaper *Pravda*.

The writer of the article is clearly one of the leaders of the Communist party who conducted the cleansing, which was held a month before the nation-wide purging was announced, in consequence of grave irregularities in the party management of Caucasian grain collections. He admits the figures at his disposal concern only a quarter of the agricultural region and that they are incomplete as well, but he asserts they typify the situation as a whole and justify certain conclusions.

In seventeen counties fifty-six examining groups, each composed of three communists—168 examiners in all—questioned 1276 communists, including 613 candidates. A total of 396, or almost a third, were expelled, mostly candidates or members of one or two years' standing. From this fact follows the first conclusion—namely, that admission to the party and training during the candidacy period are unpardonably lax.

Detailed investigation showed this to be a relatively minor error and revealed what is literally an appalling state of affairs from the Bolshevik point of view. Not merely had kulaks or their sympathizers crept into the party ranks, but such important posts as secretaryships and presidencies of local committees were held by former staff officers of Admiral Kolchak, General Denikin, and other counter-revolutionary forces.

The sons and daughters of land owners and merchants who had concealed their social origin had risen to high communist offices. In some cases the whole organization was "rotten with treason" and kulak resistance to the Soviet agrarian policy, while peasants, workers, and communists were eliminated or brow-beaten.

The writer of the *Pravda* article lays severe blame on the regional control commissions and other Soviet organs of investigation, but he admits the difficulties of their task in those places where the "hostile elements" had got control. Even the purging groups, he says, sometimes were met by a "conspiracy of silence" not easy to penetrate, and he recommends that the examiners be selected with the greatest care from among trusted and experienced communists.

Although the cases mentioned are doubtless exceptional and are partly due to conditions in North Caucasus, which is a comparatively wild region where much sporadic fighting occurred for many years, there are enough of them to justify the Kremlin in the view that "kulak reaction" united with other elements of opposition is responsible for the shortcomings of the agrarian program rather than the introduction of novel methods.

In short, the Kremlin believes the agrarian program has been deliberately sabotaged and that it is eminently time to extirpate the forces of opposition which have gained ground in the Communist party itself. It seems clear that the enemies of socialization have played a clever game. While the Kremlin and the nation as a whole strained its utmost energy and attention on the Five-Year Plan, enemies were "boring from within," instead of, as in earlier years, attacking from without.

The Caucasian cross-section will probably set the average results for the purging in the Lower Volga, Ukraine, and other sections where the agrarian program has been lagging, but the proportion of black sheep is likely to be lower in successful agricultural districts and industrial centers, where the Communist

party control is more vigilant. But whether it is by force of circumstances or by design, it is not bad tactics to begin the purging in the region affected worse.

Moscow, *January 16, 1933*.—Joseph Stalin gave his fellow-communists “hell and Maria” in a speech such as has not been heard in Russia since the days of Nikolai Lenin. The address, made last Wednesday, was in Lenin’s manner, too—one brief central thesis thrice reiterated.

“What is wrong with grain collections?” asked M. Stalin, and answered, “We are, dear comrades—we, not the peasants or the weather or class enemies, but we communists, who have the greatest power and authority the world ever saw, yet have made a series of glaring blunders. That is what is wrong.

“We failed to realize the peasants would jump at the chance of selling grain at high prices on collective markets rather than at low, fixed prices to state grain collectors. We thought that once the socialist form of collectives was instituted our whole job was done and that the collectives would run themselves socialistically.

“We miscalculated the new tactics of hostile forces of boring from within, instead of engaging in open warfare. For that we are to blame” (a sentence that is repeated a dozen times), “not the peasants.”

Put more briefly still, M. Stalin says the Communist party, or rather local communists, did not see that, while the collective farm in form and principle was a socialist fortress, it might also become—and in many cases did become—a fortress for anti-socialists.

In union lies strength, he said in effect, and 1000 united peasants are far more dangerous if their leadership falls into enemy hands than 1000 individualist peasants. While the communists had rested on the laurels of the high percentage of col-



lectivization, hostile forces had turned their own guns against them.

In point of fact, this is a somewhat tardy discovery. Two or three years ago a communist with profound rural experience pointed out the danger to me, adding that the machine-tractor stations gave the Kremlin the whiphand if it were properly utilized, and your correspondent wrote that. So today M. Stalin concludes:

"And I think the new tractor station political department will be the decisive means to straighten out the situation in short order."<sup>1</sup>

That is the nub of the speech, to which he worked up because it is worth remembering that the vigilantes will not be local communists but will be appointed direct by the Central Executive Committee—that is, by the Kremlin. It is militarism, and it is meant to be. Stalin says: "We have the greatest power and authority, and no one can hinder us from running the collectives as state interests and the interests of Leninism demand."

Moscow, *January 20, 1933*.—A strange and peculiar Bolshevik ceremony occurred at a recent meeting of the Central Committee of the party in the shape of formal "peccavi" speeches by three leaders of the former right opposition, N. Bukharin, Alexei Rykov, and M. Tomsy, which subsequently were published in the *Pravda*.

As a result, M. Bukharin was adjudged to have atoned for his earlier errors, but MM. Rykov and Tomsy are still held to be wanting and have received sharp warning to watch their steps most carefully in the future. Superficially, all three speeches were much the same: they confessed grievous misjudgment of the agrarian situation five or six years ago and

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. "The Party's Policy" *infra*.

failure to realize the need for intensified industrialization and voiced full present adherence to the party policy, giving almost fulsome praise to its guiding spirit, Joseph Stalin. Last, but not least, all three agreed to the present Kremlin thesis that the fight for rural socialization had produced something like a "state of war"—that is, class war—wherein any opposition was equivalent to high treason.

M. Bukharin specifically stated that some oppositionists had attacked the "barracks regime" of the Kremlin, but said he considered the Kremlin's forcefulness justified by the acute character of the class struggle.

Read more carefully, however, it appeared that M. Bukharin had honestly convinced himself of the Kremlin's rightness and his own error, whereas the "true meat of doctrine," as old Scotch theologians used to say, was lacking in his colleagues.

M. Bukharin's exposition of how he reached the conviction that M. Stalin and his supporters had "become" leaders by a sort of natural logical development of circumstances was worthy of the Athanasian Creed. M. Rykov, on the other hand, made a clever forensic defense which seemed to lack sincerity and once or twice seemed to verge on sarcasm.

M. Tomsy's speech sounded genuine, and in places rose to touching eloquence, but he, too, failed to convey the impression that he really was sure the party majority had been correct throughout. His rebuke to those who said he had been backward in confessing error was: "Do you think it a light matter for a veteran Bolshevik revolutionary like me to admit I was false to the ideals of the revolution—that such things are said easily, with smiling lips?"

This was as striking as his bold explanation of why he had attacked M. Stalin, "not from doubt of his personal character or of his devotion to the communist cause, but because I believed it my duty to point out his errors of policy."

Although all three disavowed connection or sympathy with

the new opposition, which they heartily condemned, it is interesting to note that they and, for that matter, the Kremlin spokesman also seem to take for granted that these periodic outbursts of intra-party opposition are, in a sense, an expression of resistance by anti-socialist forces in the country which somehow influence the weaker vessels, even among the elect of the Central Committee. Here, again, there is a curious parallel with theology, as if the spirit of anti-socialism had become personified like Saint Paul's devil and was always seeking to corrupt those whose faith was not wholly pure.

What seems the simpler explanation is that intra-party opposition is a more or less natural reflection of partial popular discontent reminiscent of the days when the children of Israel "murmured" against Moses in the wilderness and longed for Egypt's lost fleshpots.

The Russians can see the promised land of socialism near before them, but up to the present moment its quest has brought much hardship, while the "milk and honey" are still to come.

Moscow, *January 24, 1933*.—A decree was signed today by Joseph Stalin and Premier Molotov empowering local authorities of the North Caucasus to "mobilize" peasants for the grain campaign and appointing a special commission of six, with "all authoritative rights," to conduct the campaign and enjoining the severest repression of all hostile forces.

The Caucasus showed itself last year to be something like a stronghold of anti-socialist forces, and in the party "purge" there in December it was found necessary to expel a third of the total membership and to remove many thousand families—even whole villages—to other parts of the Soviet Union.

To finish the job the Kremlin now adopts still stronger measures in furtherance of its expressed intention to smash class enemies without pity. Unless climatic conditions are excep-

tionally unfavorable, it is probable that this single lesson will suffice for the rest of the country and that the sowing campaign this spring will proceed without the sabotage or confusion that characterized last spring's. In other words, today's Draconian measure is likely to be justified by events.

The decree appeared at first sight to be a reversion to the acute period of militant communism, if not a declaration of civil war itself. It was said, however, that no estimate could be more absurd in the present state of Soviet affairs, when the North Caucasus has just completed the state grain collections despite the difficulties made by the opposition, and actually is one of the most collectivized—that is, most socialized—areas of the whole Union.

It is perfectly true that the party cleansing showed that class enemies, peasant individualists, and even former White officers had obtained ingress into the management of collective farms and even of the Communist party itself, but the forces working for socialization nevertheless are extremely strong.

In a sense, of course—because of these local successes by anti-communist elements—the North Caucasus has become a test case. It begins the spring sowing campaign by virtue of its geographical position, and the Kremlin evidently feels it a "shock point" for a final attack upon what is left of the opposition. If, as is probable, the measures adopted in the North Caucasus prove successful, the cause of rural socialization will have been won in the coming year.

Moscow, *January 29, 1933*.—With the introduction this month of two measures of action to win the villages to real socialization—the formation of a political department in the machine-tractor stations and the "mobilization" decree in the North Caucasus—the coming spring will witness a decisive struggle on the agrarian front.

Events have shown that the mere form of collectivization is not sufficient—that the old individualist spirit remained in the new organizations and often gained strength by the sheer fact of greater unity.

During the past fortnight the writer has asked a number of prominent communists why the steps now projected were not taken earlier. Some said that the material equipment had been inadequate hitherto, others that there had been an insufficient personnel, but Joseph V. Stalin gave the fundamental reason—that the Communist party as a whole had been hypnotized by the socialist form but had neglected its spirit and substance.

Everyone felt that there was something wrong with the collectives, but no one quite knew what, or what to do about it. Now the Central Committee of the party has given the lead, and for the first time rural collectivization will be really taken in hand by a strong force of communists with full powers and a proper supply of machinery, seed, fertilizer, and, if necessary, food, under the direct control and eye of the Kremlin.

In the coming two months there will be thrown into the North Caucasus drive 50,000 communist "actives" with a reserve fund of 100,000 tons of grain and all the needed tractors, plows, and supplies to organize and invigorate the socialist cause. It is difficult to exaggerate the effect of these new decisions upon communist opinion here.

The first days of the recent Communist party sessions gave a pessimistic impression, which has always found a loud echo among resident foreigners, most of whom, for easily understandable reasons, are neither sympathetic to the Bolshevik aims nor yet convinced that when the Bolsheviks say socialism they mean socialism, not a hybrid of socialism and capitalism.

Then in quick succession came the inauguration of the machine-tractor political department, Joseph Stalin's speech of January 11 [p. 291] and the Caucasian "mobilization" decree. Here at last was the "lead" and concrete action for an attack.

Sentiment changed overnight, as did the spirit of the French army when it learned in July 1918 that Marshal Foch had at last flung the Allied divisions into a counter-offensive from Soissons to Château-Thierry.

"Instead of talking and waiting, something is being done and the initiative has passed into our hands from the hands of the enemy"—that is, in effect, what the communists feel today, as the French felt in 1918. In other words, M. Stalin's speech and the measures decided upon have galvanized the Communist party as has never been done since Lenin died.

Of course, it is also a fact that these measures are war measures and involve further interference with individual liberty. But if anyone thinks there is a state of war or anything approaching a state of war in the North Caucasus or anywhere else in the Soviet Union he is vastly mistaken.

The Russian peasants—especially in the North Caucasus, where there has always been a high percentage of more or less self-sufficient individualists—have found the agrarian revolution, otherwise known as collectivization, pretty much in accord with their own position. Whether foreigners realize it or not—and they are beginning to—that is the fact of the case.

The richer peasants hated collectivization. They were 5 percent of the total. But the poorest peasants liked it, and they were 30 percent of the total. Of the others, half—the poorer half—were rather for it. The other half were rather against it. But both sections did not care much, provided that collectivization benefited them.

But, of course, for the most part collectivization did not benefit them because of muddle, mismanagement, and slick opposition and, as M. Stalin said, communist slackness. Also there was the newness of the whole idea in a poor and backward country.

So it did not work well, although here and there a well-managed collective or machine-tractor station showed a great im-

provement both in production and in the well-being of the members. Yet always the communists had on their side half or more than half of the total peasant population and against them only a small minority, while the remainder just judged by the results.

Today for the first time the Communist party and the Kremlin itself have got down to the heart of the problem—really to help their supporters and to produce results.

Moscow, *March 12, 1933*.—Over the signature of the Ogpu chief, M. Menzhinsky, an announcement was published today that 35 persons recently arrested for complicity and sabotage in a counter-revolutionary plot in connection with agrarian difficulties, many of them officials of the Agriculture and State Farm Commissariats and most of them former bourgeois or landlords, were sentenced to death yesterday, 22 others to ten years' imprisonment, and 18 to eight years'.

The announcement adds laconically, "The sentences were carried into execution."

This is the most comprehensive act of its kind since 48 officials of the food distribution departments were summarily executed early in the autumn of 1930.

Among those shot the best known are M. E. Kovarsky, formerly of the tractor department; M. M. Wolff, a member of the agricultural commissariat, who in 1931 prepared a "second Five-Year Plan" for agriculture; and a third high official, Feodor M. Konar, otherwise known as Polashchuk, a former vice-commissar of agriculture. Another was an agronomist who was a member of a former millionaire sugar family.

Moscow, *March 27, 1933*.—Spring sowing has now been in progress nearly a fortnight in the North Caucasus and South

Ukraine—where 93 and 73 percent of the tractors of the two regions, respectively, have been repaired, but nothing is said about the horses and oxen that must do three-quarters of the whole job—and reports have begun to give a fairly clear picture of the work.

The picture is clear, but not rosy. Indeed, one might almost judge from it that what is wrong with Russian agriculture is chiefly Russians, or, anyway, Russians confronted by a comparatively novel system. This is brought out sharply in accounts of the first days' sowing in the Kuban area of the North Caucasus from local correspondents of the newspaper *Communist Youth Pravda*.

Communist Youth brigades of the collective named "Comintern" rose at 4 a.m., full of enthusiasm for the initial day's work—all pledged to mutual "socialist competition" and a record-breaking start. Then it appeared that two brigades out of five thought it was simply a trial performance and they had not brought seed, so there was a discussion to settle that.

In another brigade the commander did not understand the program listed in hectares, as he was familiar only with Russian measures. His tribulations are graphically described in an article entitled "Brigadier's Tragedy," which shows, sympathetically enough, what these youngsters are up against.

The first plow went out of commission, and the youths could not find a blacksmith. Then, it appeared, another brigade lost a tape measure and "borrowed" the brigadier's. Then someone said it was impossible to plow a certain section of land on that day because it was too wet, and they argued whether to stick to the program or not, till the brigadier's head ached.

In the excitement of the argument the midday meal was forgotten and they were three miles from the farmhouse. Some said, "Bolsheviki can work without eating." Others replied, "Yes, but the horses can't." So finally they got food.

At the end of the day they had accomplished only a third of



the program, but at that they were second on the competition list. The following day things were a trifle better, the third day still better, while on the fourth they just reached the program and took the lead in competition by the fortunate chance that half the team of their leading adversaries overslept four hours.

That is a typical picture of Young Russia "muddling through," as the British say of themselves, along an unfamiliar path. The writer believes they can and will succeed, but it will be a hard struggle. Five or six years ago, it must be remembered, these, the poorest peasants, who now run the collectives, were the employees of individual kulaks who knew their jobs and got results.

As collectivization developed, the fight between the kulaks and poorer peasants grew bitterer, with the accompaniment of beatings, murder, arson, cattle-killing, and, in reprisal, the shooting or exiling of kulaks. By the spring of 1931 it might have been said—it was said—that the kulaks were beaten. And what followed was not unlike the situation in the Southern States after the American Civil War.

Throughout the country the new collective administrations, chosen from the poorest peasants, "went haywire" with the new-found power, like the colored legislatures in the Southern States. They followed the "carpetbagger" phase, when slick kulaks or other anti-socialist elements slipped in, took control, and replaced ignorant waste with crafty looting, and lack of management with deliberate mismanagement.

That lasted until the beginning of this year, when the Kremlin took tardy but strong and sweeping action. The delay was doubtless due to an extensive and widely successful conspiracy in high circles of the various agricultural commissariats—plots which resulted in the recent shooting of 35 officials and the meting out of maximum terms of imprisonment to upward of 60 more.

It was found they had "cooked" and falsified grain figures

and state grain collections based on said figures to a shocking degree, and that they had been particularly active in intensifying collections in the winter of 1931 and 1932 from the very sections where they knew the harvest was worst.

Their reports misled the Kremlin, which continued to believe grain was available but was being hidden by peasants. The first reports of the new political tractor-station commanders, appointed and trusted by the Kremlin, have changed the situation overnight and at the eleventh hour thousands of tons of seed have been rushed to needy regions by a Kremlin decree.

Meanwhile, an accident had revealed a long-standing connection of a certain communist, almost at the head of one of the agricultural commissariats, with a treason conspiracy of different sorts. An investigation of his case, combined with another inquiry following the reports of tractor commanders, laid bare a plot about the main facts of which there is no possible doubt.

The confessions in this case at least were direct and even blatant, when the plotters realized that the game was up and the proofs overwhelming. Bolshevik propaganda is assailed abroad, but it is only now, a month later, that I am receiving the details of this plot that explains so much. Doubtless it is true that the plot was made possible and had such a measure of success as a result of muddle and red tape, which is all too common and which the Soviet government naturally is reluctant to advertise.

At any rate, today for the first time the Kremlin is running agriculture with its own men in charge on the spot and reporting direct without bureaucratic intermediaries, good, bad, or indifferent.

BERLIN, *March 31, 1933*.—The recent executions of 35 high officials in various Soviet agricultural commissariats by the OGPU involves a story of espionage that rivals the exploits of the fam-

ous Eugene Azev, who for many years lived a double life as a trusted leader of a desperate group of revolutionaries and as a spy for the Tsarist police.

The "hero" of the latest romance was Feodor M. Konar, lately vice-commissar for agriculture of the Soviet Union, who as such had access to the meetings and minutes of the Council of Commissars when his chief was absent on leave or business.

In 1920 Konar was expelled from the party on the ground that he was responsible for the failure of the Soviet government established in Polish Galicia during the Soviet-Polish War, but somehow he managed to explain matters and was reinstated. There was some confusion, he said, between him and another man named Polashchuk.

In the following year he went to Moscow to live with his brother. The latter also was a member of the Communist party and specialized in the affairs of the Communist International. Both were supple citizens who displayed particular ability in stepping exactly upon the center of the "party line." That was an achievement in itself during the troublous years of the intra-party opposition.

Konar specialized in agriculture and steadily advanced in rank and importance, and two years ago he was appointed vice-commissar in charge of state grain collections. Meanwhile, his brother made frequent trips abroad on Communist International business, mainly to neighboring states.

The apartment of the two men became the center of the "true blue incorruptibles" of the Kremlin policy, and though most of their friends were men of secondary standing they were on excellent terms with the men of higher rank.

Suddenly, about a month ago, by sheer accident, according to the general belief, it was discovered that Konar also was on "excellent terms" with a prominent foreign diplomat—too excellent terms, and an order went out for his arrest.

The story goes that he was indignant when the OGPU guards

summoned him. "It is absurd," he said of the order for his arrest. "I'll telephone" (to the Ogpu headquarters) "at once." Then they showed him the signature on the warrant, and he buried his head in his hands.

Inquiry and Konar's own confession brought out that for thirteen years he was a secret agent of a foreign power and that he was, in fact, responsible for the betrayal of the Galician Soviet because he was also Polashchuk.

He revealed, too, that his "brother" was not related to him by blood but was a brother-agent in the same service, whose trips abroad served admirably to supplement the information Konar was unable to transmit directly to his diplomatic friends in Moscow.

Further investigation showed that there was a double conspiracy—not merely for the transmission of Soviet secrets to a foreign power, but to strike at the most vital point of the Soviet socialization program in diminishing the food supply and driving the peasants to ruin and hostility by deliberate mismanagement and sabotage of the grain collections.

The case was considered so grave that the whole presiding council of the Ogpu participated in the judgment. The evidence was utterly damning and for the first time in the Ogpu's history the verdict was delivered without the court's retiring for consultation.

And still another exception was made. The sentence was carried out immediately, instead of giving forty-eight hours' grace for a possible pardon by the president of the republic.

## THE PARTY'S POLICY

Moscow, *February 27, 1933*.—The next two months will witness the first round of what the Soviet leaders hope will be the final struggle to win the peasants to Bolshevism.

The spring sowing campaign this year has particular importance, not only because the food shortage is already widespread and serious and the autumn-sown grain is considerably behind the program in the chief areas—the Ukraine, North Caucasus, and Lower Volga—but because the Bolsheviki themselves have deliberately made it a test case.

They decided to swing all the forces in their command into an effort to overcome peasant apathy, individualism, dislike of novel collective methods, and the previous mismanagement of collective farms.

At that, it is only the first round, because sowing is one thing and harvesting and mobilizing grain for the state another, as last year showed. Nevertheless, the degree of success or failure in the sowing campaign is likely to determine the ultimate issue, unless weather conditions prove exceptionally unfavorable.

Before attempting to estimate the probabilities it is necessary to outline the basic facts of the situation and the causes that led the Kremlin to make this unparalleled and exceptional effort. The official Soviet view advanced by Joseph Stalin himself is that the communists were oversatisfied with the entry of the majority of the peasants into the collective farms and that the communists had left the peasants more or less to themselves during the past two or three years, with the result that hostile elements had got control in many quarters and had sabotaged collectivization.

This, perhaps, is mainly correct, though ordinary mismanagement would doubtless be labeled sabotage in almost all the cases where the responsible parties were of kulak or non-proletarian origin. One thing is certain, that during the past two years farming efficiency and results have progressively degenerated throughout the three regions mentioned.

The partial drought of 1931, the continuous advance of weeds, especially in the North Caucasus, and heavy grain exports left a comparatively narrow margin for the autumn sowing of 1931 and the spring sowing of 1932. The unexpected additional demand for grain necessitated by the Far Eastern war danger last winter increased peasant discouragement and led to this situation—that, although the spring sowing was nominally up to the schedule, much of the land was sown very lightly.

These conditions were made worse by the exodus of peasants from the land—especially in the Ukraine—to towns and new construction camps that have been features of the Five-Year Plan. The labor shortage was enhanced by the “removal” of tens of thousands of kulaks—that is, more or less active opponents of collectivization, who, after all, were the most efficient farmers.

Meanwhile, there was a progressive dearth of livestock both for working and manuring the land. This was caused partly by widespread killing of livestock two or three years ago during the collectivization campaign, which alone admittedly reduced livestock 30 to 40 percent. Added to this were mismanagement and numerous cases of deliberate sabotage.

The peasant discouragement passed a more dangerous stage as far as results were concerned—a stage of apathy—and in large sections of the three regions it is doubtful whether more than two-thirds of the crop was harvested at all during last summer (1932). Autumn sowing and the grain collections alike were badly behind schedule, and today the land is foul and un-

fallowed, with the people in many areas, especially in the North Caucasus, listless and reduced to the lowest living standards, if not actual hunger.

"The peasants are lying on their stoves," were the words that even communists in the neighborhood remarked to a recent foreign visitor. That is an ominous phrase, which signifies that Ivan Ivanich has resorted as he did last year and twelve years ago to the grimly efficacious weapon of literally lying down on the job.

The Bolsheviki still repeat that there is enough hidden grain both for seeding and for preventing hunger, but eyewitness accounts of trustworthy foreigners—and, for that matter, the Soviet newspapers' reports of conditions and the measures adopted—negative such optimism. It is true that such hoards are being discovered and the wretched owners "removed" as kulaks or malignant elements to increase the process of degeneration and apathy that is reducing the Soviet Union's last acres to "skin and bone and a hank of weed," to paraphrase Kipling.

It is a gloomy picture, thrown into relief by high lights here and there of prosperous collectives that escaped the blight of mismanagement or sabotage. It is these successes that steel the Bolshevik heart against "these dumb dark peasants," as the writer heard one indignant "comrade" put it, and at the same time give them the assurance—the certainty—in their fanatic conviction that collectivization can, must, and shall triumph at all costs.

How this is intended to be accomplished will form the subject of the following dispatch.

Moscow, *February 28, 1933*.—The Bolshevik drive to make collective farming successful operates on two principles—positive action to conscript, support, and organize, and negative action to destroy opposition, now called "measures of repression."

Before an attempt is made to describe how either works in practice, it is necessary to explain the theory and motives behind these repressive measures.

Joseph Stalin has said, and other leaders have echoed his words in the most forceful terms, that the authority and determination of the Communist party are equally unlimited and that there will be no hesitation to use the power at their disposal—namely, force—to attain the desired end.

Recent decrees bristle with words like “mercilessly” or “without pity,” and the Bolsheviki believe themselves no less bound by duty to “smite and spare not” than the soldiers of Allah, who offered unbelievers the choice between the Koran and the sword.

One of M. Stalin’s hardest “young men,” P. P. Postishev, lately appointed assistant secretary of the Ukrainian Communist party, in his initial speech to his new comrades at the Ukrainian capital, Kharkov, gave them a sound verbal drubbing for their past slacknesses and shortcomings and took the occasion to refer to repressive measures.

The latter, he said, should be strong, sharp, and quick, fitted exactly to the needs in each case, not excessive if possible, but still less erring on the side of indulgence. As he might have put it, where a head or a hand is raised in opposition knock it down or chop it off. Briefly put, that is the whole theory of dictatorial rule from Rameses to Hitler.

And no rule is so dictatorial—one can add, no cruelty is so harsh—as when those who exercise it passionately and utterly believe they are doing their duty, or, as it was said in earlier days, “doing God’s work.”

“In the name of humanity and socialism” or “in the name of Allah and his Prophet” may differ in form, but they are identical in fact, and since Torquemada burned the bodies of heretics to save their souls there has been no form of human action so ruthless as that which has been inspired by idealistic and altruistic motives.



The ordinary restraining factors of pity and respect for others—what the British call “treating people decently”—cease to operate. The only qualifying considerations are whether the executant of the repressive measures has the power to carry them out and what he hopes to achieve by doing so.

In the Bolsheviks’ case there is no doubt about their power at present, and the writer is convinced they know quite well their purpose. Fanatic they may be, but not with the blind fanaticism of Torquemada. They are simply trying to introduce a new form of farming which they believe to be better and more efficient, not only for the peasants but the nation as a whole.

They contend, apparently with justice, that where the new system has received proper trial without sabotage it has already amply proved its superiority and has greatly increased both food production and the actual happiness of the peasant producers.

There seems no reason to doubt that the Kremlin’s viewpoint is shared and supported by the strongest and leading sections of the Russian people—in short, that the Kremlin has the national backing to a degree fully as great, say, as the British government in its decision to fight the World War to a victorious finish in the dark winter of 1917 and the early spring of 1918.

The Russian masses may and do grumble about shortages and other difficulties, but there is no sign that they are horrified, alarmed, or even disapproving at the sight of “removals” of recalcitrant peasants or at other repressive measures in town or country.

They accept the Bolshevik explanation that “class enemies” must be defeated and made powerless and, as far as the writer can see, they accept it readily as a natural and even excellent thing.

What form those measures take will be described in the following dispatch.

Moscow, *March 1, 1933*.—The outer world is beginning to talk about a new Red terror in Russia, but, as explained previously, neither the Bolsheviki themselves nor leading sections of the Russian people consider it anything but “repressive measures” against class enemies and opponents of the socialization program.

These measures appear different in town and country, but really are identical in that both consist in exile, or, as the Soviet calls it, “removal.” Incidentally there is a third form of repressive action applied in the Communist party itself, namely, the purge, with its risk of expulsion, which looms over the “comrades” little less ominously than exile over recalcitrant peasants or loafing, dishonest workers.

On such workers repression is being applied through the new passport system, which superficially is no more or less than compulsory registration of all the adult inhabitants of the principal cities and adjacent areas and the biggest construction works, like Magnitogorsk and Kuznetsk. In practice it means that a passport—that is, a residence permit—will be refused, and they already are being refused to persons of “undesirable social origin” such as former aristocrats, priests, officers, police, and business men, on the one hand, and worthless workers, on the other.

To Americans it doubtless sounds atrocious that any authority should thus uproot and disrupt homes. But Bolsheviki reply sarcastically, “And what about your economic system, which suddenly and mercilessly cuts jobs and savings from under millions of families and throws them literally into the street or at the mercy of charity? Don’t you know there have been more American homes thus disrupted in the past four years than in all of our removals of kulaks and other enemies? And, remember, we uproot enemies; you break the hearts of your own supporters.”

There is a further point the Bolsheviki might but significantly do not make—the living conditions for almost all the “re-

movees" in Russia already are so glum and grim that no change can be much worse.

Now take the case of the peasants of North Caucasus, which for the moment is the spearhead of the Soviet campaign for collective farms. It may horrify Americans to hear that a thousand Cossack families—five or six thousand souls—have been removed en masse from a certain area because they opposed collectivization. Passively, it must be understood; there is no active opposition or violent revolt anywhere. That has proved useless and fatal, as the kulak learned two or three years ago.

That the number reported is exaggerated, as five or ten thousand families, does not affect the issue. The exaggeration may annoy the censorship, but exile is still exile. All right, but in the last three years there were a million other persons similarly removed before these last 5000 as opponents of rural collectivization.

"And what of it?" ask the Bolsheviks with cruel logic. "They are class enemies, and anyway we do not kill them; we take and put them to work somewhere else because their opposition where they are hampers the development of our socialist system. If you like, they are casualties in the economic war, just like the millions of uprooted American casualties. But we believe our system gains by uprooting them and we know and you know your system loses by the uprooting of your folks."

BERLIN, *March 2, 1933*.—In previous dispatches the writer has given a gloomy picture of the situation in the North Caucasus, the Lower Volga region, and the Ukraine, with their manifold difficulties of sabotage and peasant apathy and the harsh measures adopted to overcome them.

But there is a brighter side to the story, and it involves positive measures of construction and organization. The new political department of the machine-tractor stations is not, as the

writer was originally inclined to think when the decree was issued, a sort of new rural Ogpu—that is, an additional form of repressive action.

The new department is the greatest constructive step toward the efficient socialization of agriculture yet taken in Soviet history. It is being modeled, not on the Ogpu but on the political department of the Red Army, which—nowadays at any rate—has nothing to do with surveillance or even the military intelligence service, in the Western sense, but handles and organizes the political education—on communist lines, of course—of Red soldiers from recruits to reservists.

It works effectively and on terms of real comradeship between the higher and lower ranks, which is one of the greatest achievements of the Red Army, the discipline of which has been perfected without involving social barriers or harsh treatment of the men by the officers.

The commanders of the new rural political departments are being selected principally from the most experienced army “politicals” with long party membership and the knack of combining authority with the aforesaid Red Army comradeship. These commanders, who will number about three thousand, will be directly appointed by the central committee of the Communist party and will in the final issue have control over all local government and Communist party organizations.

They and their subordinates will organize and direct not only farming but ultimately the whole rural life and will co-ordinate with it the activities of volunteers—Young Communists, shock-brigaders, and peasant reservists—who are being mustered by tens of thousands for the sowing campaign.

Clearly it is militarism but of the Red Army brand, not the Prussian type or Ogpu militarism. The writer can state without fear of contradiction that the Red Army is the finest creation of the Soviet power. The troops are smart, disciplined, well equipped, and contented to a degree that is positively startling

when compared with the civilian muddle, mismanagement, shortages, and murmuring against the difficulties of life.

The question remains whether the Red Army methods can be successfully applied in the Russian village and whether the Red Army spirit will rouse Ivan Ivanich from his dejected apathy. The writer believes they can with the help of militarization, which seems common to all revolutionary movements.

At any rate, there is an obvious parallel between the present state of affairs in the U.S.S.R. and the Napoleonic period in France or Cromwellian England, with the important difference that Napoleonism flourished on foreign adventure, whereas the Soviet is devoting its energies to a "battle on the home front" for the socialization of industry and agriculture.

## THE SPRING SOWING CAMPAIGN

Moscow, *April 6, 1933*.—The first two weeks of spring sowing have given such good results that *Pravda*, in an editorial, utters what is almost a cry of triumph. At any rate, the words are a strong appreciation and they contrast sharply with recent pessimism. The figures certainly justify the change in attitude.

Whereas in 1931 the initial fifteen days of sowing in the North Caucasus averaged 64,220 acres daily and last year only 44,460 acres, this year's average was 76,570 acres up to the first of April. But that average is smaller than the figures for April 1, 2, and 3, which were respectively 86,450 acres, 118,560, and 158,080.

The total area sown up to the evening of April 3 in the North Caucasus, which is reputed to be in the worst straits of all the regions, was 1,294,280 acres. The Ukraine, also said to be in a bad condition, has sown more than 2,000,000 acres, whereas last year, with a later spring, both regions had scarcely started sowing at this date.

Small wonder that *Pravda* is emboldened to declare it proof that the rank and file of the peasants is at last rallying to socialist farming with, the editorial emphasizes, the invaluable help and leadership of the political department of the machine-tractor stations, which has also done yeoman service in the Crimea and the Lower and Middle Volga regions.

The importance of this news can hardly be exaggerated, as what is at stake is the basic question of whether socialism will be accepted by the Russian village masses or whether the peasants shall be reckoned—in a sense at least—anti-socialist and counter-revolutionary forces, before which the Kremlin must either

yield or against which it must engage in a long and bitter struggle.

It is true, *Pravda* stresses, that weather conditions have been unusually favorable. *Pravda* also admits that this initial success does not insure final victory and, indeed, entitles its editorial, "Remember, the biggest job is still ahead of us." But Russians, like other folk, like to "jump on the bandwagon," and it does look as if the peasants en masse will follow the Kremlin's lead.

Finally, it may be said that the figures this year are more trustworthy than ever before as representing direct reports to the Kremlin from its own picked tractor brigade commanders.

Moscow, April 20, 1933.—The Soviet press published a communiqué today from the southern "grain front" that is far more important in the eyes of the Soviet Union than a dozen big political trials. And the news is good.

By April 15 a total of 25,000,000 acres had been planted, as compared with 8,000,000 up to the same date last year. The figures for the period this year are 7,000,000 acres in the Ukraine, as against 1,250,000 last year; 3,500,000 in the North Caucasus this year, as compared with 2,250,000 last year; 3,500,000 acres in the Lower Volga region, as against 50,000 last year. And similar gains are recorded by other regions.

Altogether 10.9 percent of the sowing program has been accomplished. This figure is significant, but less so than the feeling in high government circles in Moscow, which is evidently optimistic.

At the full-dress reception given last night by Foreign Commissar Litvinov to members of the foreign diplomatic corps—at which British diplomats were conspicuously absent—Karl Radek, prominent Soviet commentator, voiced the Russian sentiment to me, thus:

"What the British will do about the embargo we do not know. What America will do about recognition we do not know. We don't even know what Japan will do about war, and all three of these unknown quantities have great importance.

"But what counts most to us is this year's harvest. If the crops are good—and the prospects so far are better than we expected—we can tell the whole world where to get off."

So Catherine the Great, who knew her Russia in days before Tsarism became effete, once said, "One good crop in this country atones for ten years of political errors." Or, in the modern Bolshevik phraseology, one good crop compensates for the sweat, strain, and bureaucratic muddle of two Five-Year Plans.

KIEV, *April 25, 1933*.—Although wet weather has delayed farm work in the past week, the peasants are well ahead of last year's figures, and there are clear signs of a new spirit among them. Three factors are responsible.

One is the decree establishing fixed ratios for grain collections, with the right of peasants, whether individual or collectivized, to sell their surplus in the open market after collections have been completed. The second is the political department of the tractor stations, and the third the food and seed release.

"When we first got here six weeks ago," the commander of a political unit at a tractor station told me, "the peasants were sullen and apathetic. As one old man put it: 'We are "bespri-zorni"' [homeless waifs]. The government doesn't care whether we live or die.'

"Our first job was to explain the new decrees, about which the majority had hardly heard, and to mobilize the rural communists and Young Communists, who, I regret to say, had gotten terribly slack. Well, we smartened them up in short order."



The speaker commands a brigade in the Red Army and has two Orders of the Red Flag for exceptional valor. He continued:

"Then we tackled the administrations of the collective farms, and I soon saw what was wrong. In about half of these collectives every crook and loafer had made a beeline for the executive job. Why, in a little collective of a hundred families there were as many as thirty persons on the administration payroll who sat around writing papers or making speeches, but never did a lick of honest work, some of them communists at that.

"We made short work of that, I tell you. We kicked out the kulaks and grafters and reduced the administration to five (the maximum) and made even them understand they had to do their managing out in the fields, not in warm rooms with a glass of tea and a bottle of vodka beside them. Then things began to move. The peasants said:

"'Oho, they have taken thought for us in Moscow. They have sent a man with a whip to chase the dogs that have been eating us up.' And they went to work with fresh spirit."

From another source the writer got a story which he could not verify but which sounds true. The tractor station political commander went to a big collective that was in notoriously bad shape, despite the fact that there was an important local communist in charge, whose brother was a high official in the regional committee. The commander found both of these men at the farm with a gang of cronies having a social evening with song and vodka.

One word led to another and finally the commander shot the farm president and arrested his brother at the point of a pistol. The commander was court-martialed, but the inquiry showed that both brothers had fought in General Denikin's White Russian army—the regional official as an officer. The commander was acquitted. The regional official was expelled from the Communist party and sent to trial for complicity in the "willful

waste of socialized property," a charge that carries the death sentence.

In the Kiev region, as everywhere in Russia, the collectives vary according to the quality of management. I was told that of the eight largest collectives near the city, two were flourishing, one was in fair shape, two were poor, and the others shot to pieces. In all three latter there was unwieldy management as well as "hostile elements" at the top.

One of the poor collectives had an honest and popular but incompetent and illiterate manager. The other had a crook from the city who had been speculating with the collective's grain and was tried and shot.

The collective in fair shape had an overlarge administration, but the two good ones were running with a minimum of bureaucracy by a small administration, the members of which shared in the field work.

## THE HARVEST

KHARKOV, *September 17, 18, 19, 1933.*—I have just completed a 200-mile auto trip through the heart of the Ukraine and can say positively that the harvest is splendid and all talk of famine now is ridiculous.

Everywhere one goes and from everyone with whom one talks—from communists and officials to local peasants—it is the same story: "Now we will be all right, now we are assured for the winter, now we have more grain than can easily be harvested."

This "now" is significant. It contrasts with "then"—last winter—which they tell you, "was hard." Hard it was and I saw empty houses that bore witness—people ran away to find work and food elsewhere.

On the other hand, there were no big fields of weeds such as I saw in the North Caucasus; here they sowed a greater area than last year and many—perhaps one might say most—of those who fled have returned to work on the harvest.

The populace, from the babies to the old folks, looks healthy and well nourished. They are all awaiting the day when the state grain deliveries will be completed and they can sell on the open market the supplies of grain that they will have received for their work days.

Each individual will get about five to seven kilograms of grain per work day, nearly two tons on the average for the year, which is far beyond anything they had before, except in the rich kulak families. They expect the deliveries to be completed by the middle of October; then they can sell the grain and buy goods.

That is the first need of the peasants, to buy goods, but local communists and officials emphasize other needs—radio and telephone communication and, above all, better roads and signposts.

Twenty miles from Kharkov the signposts end and the road becomes a dirt track across the country. The peasants you ask know the nearest village and that is all, and you travel by map and by the sun and by guesswork.

One thing, however, is sure—the peasants have accepted collectivization and are willingly obeying the Kremlin's orders. The younger peasants already understand that the Kremlin's way will benefit them in the long run, that machines and mass cultivation are superior to the old "strip system" and individual farming.

They get help from the tractor stations and have begun to understand that it is really help and not just orders from above but something that will improve their own living conditions.

Some of the older ones do not yet realize this and do not like the new way, but they are following it perforce. The children—Pioneers, they call them—are enthusiastic. One small boy told me, "I got a prize of a bicycle because my troop of Pioneers guarded the grain five nights from robbers. My mother said I was silly to go out like that and sleep in the fields, but she doesn't understand that it is our duty to guard socialized property."

That is good Soviet doctrine that these children have learned.

"And how was it in the winter?" I asked the child. "Did many people leave your village?"

"Not many, but the lazy ones and those with kulak ideas," he replied. "They said collective farming would never work, that we were crazy to stay and try it. But we stayed and it does work. This year we have better crops than ever my grandfather, who is 80 years old, remembers."

And that is the answer—the Kremlin has got the younger generation on its side, and the combination of good weather,

improved organization, and new machines has produced results.

Nevertheless, one thing is clear—there has been a big change of personnel, not only among the upper ranks of the peasantry and the managers of the collective farms but in the Communist party officials. Both here and in the North Caucasus one finds lots of officials who have been on the job only six months or less.

One asks why. They reply rather vaguely, "The management here was not efficient," or "We were sent here," or "There were kulak elements and kulak sentiment in the managers of this or that section and they were removed and we came to replace them."

Then they add proudly:

"But we have done the job—this year we are months ahead of last year in grain deliveries."

I sum up my impressions from this trip and from conversations with scores of peasants and local officials—the collectivization policy was not generally popular, there was much passive resistance last year, and those who resisted suffered bitterly. So today there is no more resistance and those who co-operate with the Kremlin policy have already begun to understand, and get, its benefits.

In short, the mechanization and collectivization of Russian agriculture have come to stay and the Kremlin has won its battle.

*September 18.*—"Ukraine grain deliveries to the state had been accomplished 66 percent by September 10—which was the same as the figure reached three months later last year—and we expect the full quota of 5,000,000 tons to be completed by mid-October," said the chief of the Ukrainian communist section of the tractor stations, Alexander Asatkin.

M. Asatkin, with whom I talked Saturday, declared the crop

had surpassed the highest expectations as it had reached one ton per acre in some sections, where the collectivists were receiving 15 to 25 kilograms (33 to 55 pounds) per working day. The average, naturally, was lower, but it is expected to run as high as seven kilograms per working day, which is two and a half times greater than last year.

The "socialized sector" of Ukrainian agriculture this year is 80 percent of all the cultivated land and it is served by 646 tractor stations with an average of 40 machines each. About 70 percent of the peasant population is collectivized, but in some sections, especially the southern wheat region, collectivization has reached 85 and 90 percent.

M. Asatkin said most positively that the Ukraine's 33,000,000 population was amply assured of food for the coming year. Open-market prices are expected to drop 50 to 70 percent when the state deliveries are concluded and the peasants are allowed to sell.

In reply to my question as to whether there had been mass emigration last year, M. Asatkin said, "There undoubtedly was a considerable outward flow from the villages and towns to the Donetz basin, to White Russia and elsewhere, but we, nevertheless, accomplished the sowing program almost 100 percent and with the summer months the population tide flowed back."

To another question as to whether the death rate was as high as 10 percent, M. Asatkin said firmly, "No, nothing like it. There was certainly distress in some sections, but the reports were greatly exaggerated."

He admitted that there had been considerable mortality among livestock, which had increased the difficulty of the transportation problem, and he continued, "Despite the greatly augmented production of tractors and automobiles, transportation is one of our chief handicaps. The grain deliveries would have been completed already with better transportation. Delivery points and elevators are literally choked with grain."

That I can affirm from personal observation. M. Asatkin asserted confidently that the Ukraine accepted collectivization once and for all and that the political section of the tractor stations had been a decisive factor in the struggle. He, like his colleague with whom I talked at Rostov-on-Don, stressed the fact that the communist agents (*politkas*) of the tractor stations were less coercive than organizational in their functions.

"The peasants," he said, "now understand that we are really trying to help them improve their methods and lives. Our chief problem, after finishing the autumn sowing, will come during the winter months, in what we call 'cultural work.'

"That includes everything from propaganda and educational meetings to improvement of radio and telephone transmission, the issuing of newspapers—each political unit and tractor station has its own newspaper, published about ten times monthly—the bettering of roads, new building, and work among the women and youngsters, whom we consider no less important than the men."

M. Asatkin spoke with genuine enthusiasm, saying that his eight months' work in the Ukraine had been extraordinarily interesting and had convinced him of the enormous possibilities of the tractor service in developing agriculture and raising the peasants' living standards.

"Stalin was right," he concluded. "We communists were to blame for not organizing rural life and work and for thinking the collectives could run themselves on an efficient socialist basis without our control."

"Why didn't you have political sections sooner?" I asked.

"Because there were not enough tractors, for one thing," he replied. "But now we are producing them at a rate that will utterly transform the countryside in two or three years. Economically and culturally it will be the greatest revolution in the history of the world, and I am proud to have had the privilege of playing a responsible part in it."

*September 19*,—Summing up the impressions of my ten days' trip through the North Caucasus and the Ukraine, where I traveled with greater freedom and absence of supervision than had been expected, I repeat the opinion that the decisive engagement in the struggle for rural socialization has been won by the Kremlin.

The cost in some places has been heavy, but a generally excellent crop is already mitigating conditions to a marked extent. But it still is clear that Soviet administrators must overcome more obstacles before the collective system and mechanization of agriculture are completely mastered.

"Any Communist party member, local official, or political section commander who thinks the job is done because we had a good harvest and are well ahead with grain deliveries and autumn sowing is a social danger today; you might almost call him a traitor," said one of the editors of the Rostov newspaper *Molot*, and M. Asatkin echoed him.

"One of the things we now must fight the hardest is the spirit of satisfaction and resting on laurels," said the latter. "There is a vast amount of hard work ahead of us to create a collective edifice on proper cultural and technical lines."

Collectivization may now be said to have been established on a solid foundation, with enormous benefit to the Russian countryside, on the condition that neither this year nor for several years to come will there be talk of extra requisitions or "voluntary super-deliveries" above the fixed program. Authorities everywhere say there will not be extra demands and admit there were errors which are now corrected.

Because of what super-deliveries meant, successful collectives paid for the mistakes and mismanagement of others. By Soviet law and Communist party decree it is a criminal offense today to ask for extra deliveries. In the event of war or a similar great emergency it might be different, but short of such an emergency the extra delivery system is abolished.



Moscow, *December 16, 1933*.—For the first time in its history the Soviet Union has completed its state grain “collections” before the end of the year—specifically, by December 14, which is two and a half months earlier than ever before.

Actually 96 percent of the collections had been made November 1, and the Crimea performed the unprecedented feat of completing its deliveries by September 1. During August and September, deliveries, reckoned in ten-day periods, ran from three to five times higher than in the same period of last year.

The total of the collections is not stated in today’s news, but the writer was informed last September in Kharkov by the chief of the Ukrainian political section of the machine-tractor stations that it would be about 24,500,000 metric tons. As the needs of the urban population, construction camps, and army are abundantly met by 17,500,000 tons, there will be available 7,000,000 tons for reserve or export.

In the latter respect it is noteworthy that the proportion of wheat in this year’s collections is half as large again as that of last year.

This result fully justifies the optimism expressed to me by local authorities during my September trip through the Ukraine and North Caucasus—optimism that contrasted so strikingly with the famine stories then current in Berlin, Riga, Vienna, and other places, where elements hostile to the Soviet Union were making an eleventh-hour attempt to avert American recognition by picturing the Soviet Union as a land of ruin and despair.

Second, it is a triumph for Joseph Stalin’s bold solution a year ago of the collective farm management problem—namely, the establishment of political sections in the tractor stations, a step that future historians cannot fail to regard as one of the major political moves in the Soviet Union’s second decade. I understand that autumn sowing has slightly surpassed the program, and the plentiful snow of this early winter augurs well for the future.

This year's special preparation of tested seed for spring sowing, although slightly behind the program, will undoubtedly be completed by the middle of February, and it can be stated confidently that the "socialized sector" of agriculture—the state and collective farms—which this year furnished 90 percent of the grain deliveries to the state, will approach the spring sowing with a new spirit of courage and energy under the guidance of the political sections of the tractor stations.

It is significant that the peasant population that fled from grain-producing areas, which suffered last winter from a labor shortage, has flowed back to the villages. The peasant beggars who were a deplorable feature of life twelve months ago in Moscow, Kharkov, and Rostov-on-Don, to name only three great cities, have now wholly disappeared.

It is difficult accurately to estimate what percentage of the total crop the grain collections form, as conditions vary in different regions. It probably is between 20 and 25 percent, which would put the cereal crop at the record figure of 100,000,000 metric tons.

A further factor of great importance is that "free trade" in foodstuffs henceforth will be permitted for the entire country, which must not be considered a new "New Economic Policy" but is undoubtedly a big advance towards the goal, announced by M. Stalin, of "making every collective Bolshevik and every collectivist prosperous."

At the same time there is a serious obstacle to the development of this "free trade" by collectivized and individual farmers in the provinces which have completed their deliveries—namely, a shortage and poor distribution of manufactured goods and other urban products required by the villages. The Soviet Fulfillment Commission, of which Joseph Stalin is a member, recently announced considerable shortcomings in the dispatching of such essentials as salt and flour to rural districts.

The newspaper *Economic Life* stresses similar weakness in

the delivery of manufactured goods. Even in Moscow Province, for instance, only 6,000,000 rubles' worth of the 20,000,000 in goods supply assigned to the villages has yet reached the local rail station.

It is true that concentration during recent years on heavy industry and capital investment has led to a shortage of consumers' goods, but their volume has been augmented of late, and their failure to reach the villages must be ascribed to other causes, chiefly poor transportation and distribution.

The transport problem remains to be solved, and freight-car loadings still run 20 to 30 percent below the daily schedule. In this respect there is a fruitful field for American enterprise—technical assistance and equipment.

As matters now stand there is a big gap in the Soviet Union between rural and urban producers. Money has little value to the peasant unless he can obtain goods with it, and unless he can do that there is no great stimulus for him to produce food-stuffs above his own needs.

Conclusion:

Russia's Ledger: Gain and Cost



## 7 RUSSIA'S LEDGER: GAIN AND COST

*(Sunday Magazine Article, October 1, 1933.)*

WHEN I first came to Moscow, at the end of August 1921, I wrote a letter to a friend in Paris in order briefly to illustrate the way news might be covered here. I began: "I am lodged in the best hotel in Moscow, in a room that is simply but adequately furnished, with electric light, steam heat and bathroom, and a telephone, for which I pay nothing. I am not the guest of the government, but hotels, like all forms of transport, are free to workers in the Soviet Union. Practically my only expense is for meals in a newly opened private restaurant where the food is as good as in the average small restaurant in Paris, and although prohibition exists here I am able to get a bottle of excellent German wine with my meals for the equivalent of 25 cents."

Now all that was absolutely true, but I continued my letter in a different vein, as follows: "I am living in the filthiest room it's ever been my misfortune to strike; a front-line dugout gives a fair comparison. Rats and mice and incredible numbers of smaller vermin. I put the legs of my bed in saucers of kerosene and even then the hungry myriads 'bomb' me from the ceiling. Of course there is no bed linen—luckily I brought an army bed roll—and the bathroom long ago ceased to function. No food is served in the hotel, only hot water for tea or shaving.

"We have found quite a decent restaurant, one of the few private ones allowed by Nep, but the only way of getting to it is by foot or in a moth-eaten hack as it is two miles from the hotel and as far as I know the only one of its kind in Moscow. The street cars do run, but as they are free, the battle to board one is ten times worse than the New York subway, and the hangers-on outside look like a swarm of bees, only dirty. If

this is the Soviet paradise give me New York or Paris." That also was absolutely true.

There, in a small, superficial way, you get the problem of covering news in Soviet Russia. It has been only too easy to paint the picture black, and a little harder, though easy enough, to paint it bright and rosy. Both are factually true and both are false, because no picture of a nation's life anywhere in the world can be accurate and honest without a blending of tones. The full picture marks the black spots but does not omit the rosy glow, and balances errors and shortcomings by success and achievement. Truth is never so distorted as when it is divided. Part of the truth can be as deceiving as the worst of lies.

When I came to Russia twelve years ago I was prejudiced against the Bolsheviki for a variety of reasons. And in that year of famine I found conditions terrible enough. But I also found, which I had not known before, that the Russian masses had been enslaved by the Tsarist regime, whose corruption and incompetence had been the chief levers of its own downfall. I found that the Soviet leaders were in the main altruists—fanatical altruists, if you like—honestly trying to make a disciplined and self-respecting nation out of this horde of newly liberated slaves.

During twelve years I have had no reason to change this opinion. Without holding a brief for socialism I have watched a steady progress—by zigzags, as Lenin said, but progress, none the less—toward the development and practice of a working socialist system. When I compare the Moscow of 1933 with the Moscow of 1921 I am amazed by what has been accomplished, and the change in the position of Soviet Russia as a factor in world affairs is no less striking than Russia's advance from a backward agrarian state, economically dependent upon the industrial West, to a stage of industrial autonomy and the solid foundations of economic self-sufficiency.

The cost and burden of this rapid transition have been pro-

digious, and the strain they inflicted upon the Russian people was increased by the deliberate attempt to socialize not only industry but agriculture and the whole mechanism of distribution and sale of goods. Where Lenin was content to retain the main sources of industrial production in state hands and leave agriculture and distribution sales to private enterprise, Stalinism has gone further and insisted that virtually all production, industrial and agrarian, and the subsequent distribution of products, be run along socialist lines.

That, said Lenin at the very moment when he introduced Nep, was his ultimate purpose, which he was abandoning only temporarily. Stalin, true to his claim to being Lenin's follower and disciple, lost no time in putting into effect as soon as possible the new ways of socialism which Lenin was forced to relinquish. The cost has been heavy in lives and human suffering, but the Kremlin leaders are men who years ago made voluntary sacrifice of their own ease and comfort, who were prepared to give their lives if need be, and who faced without flinching Tsarist prisons and Siberian exile. What does it matter to them if others now suffer or die, if only the cause for which they themselves were ready to die and suffer prevails? It is a hard and bloody doctrine, but they are hard people and Russia is a hard country.

It seems to be a rule that revolutions, from Cromwell and the French to Mussolini and Hitler, pass rapidly into a militarist phase, although the latter two have waged no wars as yet. In any case, such a militarization is now occurring in this country as a part, no doubt, of the process of disciplining and making men of a hitherto oppressed and servile race. To the democracies of Western Europe and America, whose whole history has been a struggle to maintain and buttress the rights of the individual, there must inevitably be something repugnant in the attempt of Bolshevism to submerge the individual in the state, and drill him to state service.



## Duranty Reports Russia

But Russia is not and never was a Western democracy. Its folkways are more closely attuned to the despotism of Asia. And what has happened with the Red Army has shown Soviet leaders the best and the easiest path for them to follow. No one can deny today that the Red Army is not only disciplined and efficient, but loyal and cheerful. Boys of nineteen from town or village come willingly to service, are well treated, well fed, and well equipped, and, above all, well trained, not only as soldiers but in socialist citizenship. They enter the army about 10 to 15 percent communist, nowadays, and leave it 70 to 80 percent communist. In short, the Red Army system of discipline and training is a practical success.

A similar process is being carried out with industry and agriculture—more slowly, of course, and with greater difficulties, but none the less surely. The greatest of these difficulties to date has been the simple fact that the upset of old ways and methods involved and the opposition created, to say nothing of other reasons outside the Kremlin's control, have gravely reduced the nation's food supply and lowered its living standards. "What this country needs" is one square meal a day. If everyone in Russia could be assured tomorrow of the kind of meal an American lumberjack considers adequate, there would be nothing but universal approval of the Kremlin's policies.

There is, however, an accompaniment of this militarization process in Russia which reacts unfavorably upon any foreign reporter who tries to make his news not part of the truth but the whole truth, not a black picture or a rosy picture, but a balanced picture. In twenty years of war and post-war reporting I have had considerable experience with the military mind and the way it works about news. News, to the military mind, means good news, and any attempt to report "regrettable incidents," such as occur in the best regulated of armies, is regarded by the military mind as at best a low trick unworthy of an "officer and

gentleman," and at worst as treason which merits a firing squad and death at dawn.

The Bolsheviki speak little of officers and gentlemen, and speak lots about self-criticism, but it is a melancholy fact that in their present phase of development they are tending more and more to the concealment of "regrettable incidents" in the typical military manner. They set out to smash peasant individualism and say quite frankly they will do so no matter what the cost, but their censorship throws fits when foreign correspondents begin to put numbers on these costs and declare the process involves a trebled or quadrupled death rate for an area inhabited by 40,000,000 people. Because it is the cardinal principle of the military mind to exaggerate victories and suppress, if possible, losses.

That, unhappily, is the all too prevalent notion in official Soviet circles today. And it has produced its inevitable corollary, namely, a desire by foreign newspapers to get and publish what is being suppressed. Such newspapers sometimes fail to realize that the suppressed news is only part of the truth, only the black spots of the picture, and therefore deceiving. Those who send them the news are less concerned with the intrinsic truth as a whole than with telling that part of it which the censorship is trying to suppress. And they and the censorship are equally to blame. The latter tries to "color" news by suppressing the black spots, the former does in fact "color" it in the opposite direction by stressing the black spots to the exclusion of more favorable factors.

Take for instance a recent article published in the *London Times* from "a special correspondent in Moscow." The writer is not merely anonymous but it had been the boast of the *London Times* that it will not maintain a correspondent in Moscow as long as the censorship exists. In short this is "under cover" information, designed to evade the censorship and reveal the black spots. Republished by the *New York Times*, the article

received the headline it deserved, "Soviet Russia Seen in Economic Mess." From start to finish the writer marshaled his facts in such a way as to present a picture in the darkest hues.

He begins elliptically, "The march of events in Soviet Russia has not merely proved stronger than the application of theories, but the two combined have reduced Russia economically to a vestige of its former self in the days of the Tsars." To justify this statement, which he himself has the grace to call "astonishing," he proceeds to show that food in Russia is dear and scarce in terms of paper rubles and that consumers' goods are no less difficult to obtain. And finally that there is no "communism" in Russia, or "true equality" in what the individual receives for his labor.

All this is doubtless true, and it is also true, as the writer points out, that Soviet increase in the production of factory-made consumers' goods over the Tsarist level does not compensate for the decrease of non-factory petty-production consumers' goods, peasant and small-town handicraft, which formed the main source of supply in Tsarist days. This source has been dammed or greatly thinned by Soviet restrictions upon private enterprise and trade.

This, however, does not prove that Russia is "reduced economically to a vestige of its former self." The *London Times* writer appears to realize this, albeit unwillingly, for he goes on to say, "Last year of the total national investment 13 percent only was appropriated to the production of goods for consumption, the whole of the balance being devoted to the production of capital goods. Enormous blast furnaces, dams, hydro-power stations, tractor and motor works have been erected." Without questioning the accuracy of the figure mentioned surely it is evident that the construction of these great industrial works in a country that was hitherto largely agrarian argues, if it does not absolutely prove, economic progress.

The question of argument or proof aside, what the Soviet

government aims at is the industrialization of the country as rapidly as possible, making it not only economically independent but fully capable of the industrial production modern war demands, irrespective of the blockades that enemies or geographical position and weather conditions may create. The Tsarist empire fell largely because its armies were beaten by a power with superior industrial equipment. The Bolsheviki are determined that their armies shall not suffer under the same handicap.

But this is only one of their reasons for industrialization, an urgent reason in view of their fear, which amounts almost to obsession, that their country will be attacked. Behind it is the natural and cogent desire of any great state to develop its own resources in its own way, to be no longer backward but leading, to be in short an efficient industrial unit on modern lines. That the Bolsheviki have an additional incentive, born of their dogmatic or doctrinal Marxist theories about the importance of the role to be played in the modern world by the industrial proletariat, goes without saying. The fact remains that Soviet Russia is already on the high road toward industrialization, is becoming with each day that passes more independent of foreign nations for the thousand and one products of mechanical efficiency whose production must inevitably mark the difference between great and tributary powers in the future world.

The "special correspondent" of the *London Times* conveniently ignores this aspect of the question, in order to concentrate upon the probability that Russia will not be able to handle its newborn industry efficiently, and upon the cost to the nation in general and the peasants in particular. There is truth in what he says. The cost has been prodigious, not only in lowered standard of living but in human suffering, even in human lives, because the Kremlin was not content only to undertake the struggle for rapid industrialization of a backward country, but chose to accompany it with the attempt to socialize no less rapidly the most conservative and individualistic section of the

community, whose numerical mass was enormously preponderant—the peasants. To collectivization, no less than to the strain of unprecedented capital investment, have been due the food and other shortages of recent years, which, if they have not “reduced Russia economically to a vestige of its former self,” have undoubtedly tightened the belt of the Russian people to an almost, but not quite, intolerable degree.

To the *London Times* correspondent collectivization is one of the blackest spots in his gloomy picture. He writes: “During the last two years 70,000,000 peasants have been driven from 14,000,000 holdings onto 200,000 collective farms. Those who have proved themselves successful farmers (i.e., kulaks) are hunted down, exiled to labor and timber camps in the north, massacred, and destroyed.” For anyone who knows the situation here as well as the writer in question clearly does, this is a deliberate and ingenious perversion of fact.

The truth is that during the past five (not two) years some 60 percent of the peasant population, which would include about 70,000,000 souls, have adopted the new system of combining their individual “strip” holdings (nearer 18,000,000 holdings than 14,000,000) for collective working on modern lines. The kulaks naturally opposed the new system, which if successful would eliminate all their privileges. Generally, it is true, they were the best and most productive farmers, but they were trying to hold back the clock of progress as obstinately as the “homeweavers” in England a century ago, who started riots to break the new power-driven machines which ushered in the industrial age of England and gave her economic supremacy and great wealth for many decades.

That some coercion was applied in the collectivization process is unquestionable. Three and a half years ago Stalin himself inveighed against the forceful methods employed by local authorities. But that, again, is only part of the picture. It must be remembered that fully two-thirds of the inhabitants of the

average Russian village have led for centuries a life that varied, according to weather conditions, just above or below the line of minimum subsistence. For this unhappy majority little coercion was needed to induce them to try anything new if once they understood the advantages it offered them for the future. In addition, the new collective farms enjoy privileged rates in taxation and other obligatory deliveries of products to the state, as compared with individual farmers.

Collectivization had many incentives and only one serious drawback. It was new and untried. The innate conservatism of the farmer always finds new ways unwelcome, and in a backward country like Russia the question of management must play an important role—as proved to be the case. Where collectives were well managed their superiority over the strip system was incontestable, but it was all too true that less than one in ten had proper management. Mismanagement is the reef on which the Soviet scheme of collectivization was nearly wrecked, and it was not until the beginning of this year that the Kremlin fully realized this fault and took steps to remedy it by the establishment of the political department of the tractor stations, which now serve nearly three-quarters of the collective farms. Under the political department's direction the percentage of well-managed collectives has risen from 7 or 8 to nearly 50, and the result is the best harvest Russia has known for 40 years. The cost of collectivization has been heavy, but it can already be said that it has justified itself as a system.

The *London Times* correspondent makes much of the inefficiency of Soviet industrial management. What else could be expected when a nation of backward peasants is being turned almost overnight into a modern industrial state? But they are learning fast, and learning as other nations have learned, by their own mistakes. The big tractor and automotive plants, to take one instance, which in the first years of their existence produced rickety machines in numbers far below the scheduled

program, are now operating ahead of program and delivering machines which compare well enough with the Western products on which they were modeled.

It is as ridiculous to condemn Soviet industry for inefficiency during its present period of learning industrial jobs as to suggest that England was doomed to defeat in the World War because her "new armies" were massacred wholesale by the Germans, better trained and better equipped for modern war, in the battles of 1915.

In the circumstances it could not be expected that the rate of progress in Soviet industrialization would be anything but uneven. Great blast furnaces are erected, but the ore and coke to feed them are not forthcoming in adequate quantities, or shortcomings occur in transportation, which, by the way, is one of the weakest links in the Soviet economic chain, although the *London Times* correspondent has unaccountably failed to select it as target for his broadsides. He does, however, mention the "white elephant eating its head off," the gigantic power plant called Dnieperstroy, which, under American supervision and control—and a contract drawn up by an American firm which had had wide experience of such work in backward countries and knew specifically how to frame the contract—was finished not only ahead of scheduled time but far ahead of the industrial plants it was intended to serve.

In a capitalist country the Dnieperstroy project might be said to be "eating its head off," like another costly hydroelectric achievement in America called Muscle Shoals, where many millions were sunk without any dividend return on the investment. In a socialist country dividend returns have less importance. Meanwhile, the plants which Dnieperstroy will serve are being rushed to completion, and although it is true that at present not more than a quarter of the available power is being consumed, the lag is due not only to unreadiness on the part of consumers but to the shortage of transmission material, espe-

cially copper. Such shortages occur everywhere in Soviet Russia. There is, as I have said, a great unevenness in the rate of progress, but surely these are the phenomena of growth rather than of decay, and serve as a stimulus to improvement instead of, as the *London Times* correspondent appears to believe, an omen of disaster.

If anyone asked me, after my twelve years' residence in the Soviet Union, what single factor most distinguished life here from that in capitalist countries I would reply without hesitation, "Its impermanence," meaning, particularly, the way people jump or get jumped from one job and one place to another.

Overcrowding and shortages of food and goods are not peculiar to the Soviet Union. Freedom of divorce and atheism are no novelty to other lands. Ignorance and poverty are always with us.

To the average citizen it matters little in the final instance whether wages are paid by a corporation with shareholders or by a private owner or by a state or municipal trust. But this business of never staying more than a few months on the same job or in the same place is something different—and one phase of it is not the least of the Soviet Union's difficulties.

It has been said long ago—before the revolution—that the Russians have no roots and no sense of home, as Western peoples have. Probably for the best of reasons—that few of them, except the members of a small privileged class, ever owned anything worth attaching themselves to.

The revolution set them wandering, and it seemed as if the old nomadic instinct, checked by centuries of serfdom that bound them to one spot, had burst all bounds. Today the labor turnover runs to 100 percent or more per year, due partly no doubt to hard conditions and the hope of finding something better elsewhere, but even more to an ancient habit of wandering and the desire for change.

It runs right through the whole system because among the



employee class and officials there seems almost as much movement as in the rank and file. If they do not jump they get jumped. A classic example is that of Bill Shatov, former Chicago anarchist and now a trusted Soviet executive. I met him some years ago and he said:

"I am in Rockefeller's business now—in charge of a section of the Baku oil field."

A year later I asked him, "How is oil?" and got the reply:

"Oh, I'm competing with Morgan now—running the Rostov bank." A year later he said, "Me and Charlie Schwab are now colleagues—I am a director of the metallurgic trust."

The writer next found him building the Turksib railroad in Central Asia, and he now has a similar job in charge of the construction of a great new main line that will connect Moscow with the Donetz coal field. All communists are like soldiers—liable to be sent anywhere to do anything at a moment's notice.

An Intourist guide becomes a hotel manager. The chief of the Foreign Office press department takes an important post in the construction of the Magnitogorsk metallurgic plant. A customs officer becomes the head of a state farm. One of the functionaries of the grain trust reappears as a station master.

In many cases, perhaps the majority, the change is a promotion or a demotion, but this is by no means invariable, and no stigma seems to attach to the idea of taking what appears an inferior job if the party orders it.

One of the reasons, of course, is the fact that money counts little, certainly not enough to be a valid criterion of success. Then, too, a "low" salary in one job where there is a good restaurant, co-operative store, and living quarters may be higher "real wages" than double the same amount in an enterprise where such facilities are lacking.

Not only are individuals and jobs changed about, but the names of streets and towns and the locations of offices are changed, to a bewildering degree. The writer knows of offices

and departments in Moscow that have changed their locations three times in a single year, while there is hardly a street in the city that bears the same name it bore twenty years ago.

This doubtless makes for an interesting life and surely gives plenty of variety in what otherwise might seem a drab existence, but it is hard on foreigners, especially foreign reporters, who build up a series of "pipelines" with more or less difficulty only to find that a sudden shift of the kaleidoscope has swept them all away.



Epilogue:

Red Square: Russia's Heart



## RED SQUARE: RUSSIA'S HEART

"WHY call it Red Square," ask strangers, "when it isn't Red and isn't Square, but oblong?"

The answer is, Russians don't call it Red Square, but Krasnaya Ploshchad instead.

Ploshchad doesn't mean Square but Place, like market-place or dwelling-place, and Krasnaya does mean Red but other things as well.

Krasnaya has the same root as Kraseyevaya, which means Beautiful, as this place is beautiful, because red is the color of beauty and life in Russia, where white is death and cold.

Red is beauty and life and sun, but white is ice and snow.

Some people think it's Red Square because red is the color of blood;

and well they might, since its cobbles have stunk and dripped with blood,

more blood than that other place called Place of Concord, where women of Paris sat knitting and watched the guillotine . . .

watched the triangle of steel slice necks of Aristos as they sliced carrots . . .

watched heads fall in the basket and blood trickle down to the Seine.

No trickle of blood in Moscow's Place but a rushing stream, when Peter slaughtered the Streltsi, thousands day after day. Peter the Tsar sat high on the porch above Kremlin gate, under the great clock tower, to see the Streltsi die,

while his chief executioner, a thick-set man named Tolstoy,  
which means Strong or Husky  
(he founded that noble family, for Peter made him a Count),  
hacked at the necks of rebels till his arms were red and tired.  
Then Peter rose to his six foot nine and shouted, "Way for  
the Tsar,"  
and ran down the stairs and pushed through the crowd and  
came to the round stone scaffold,  
which still stands blocking traffic, in memory of Imperial  
Mercy,  
and took the sword and finished the job in competent royal  
fashion.  
Which doubtless gave pleasure to his obedient subjects.

But the real reason why Red Square's so named  
is that Red is the Russian version of what Rome called  
Purple:  
the flaming dye which Tyrians made from shell-fish, honor-  
stripe of Senators and Cæsars,  
purple not at all but deep blood-crimson, heritage from  
Rome,  
Cæsar's Imperial Crimson, as Tsar is Russian heir to Cæsar.

One side of this great Red Place, eightscore yards wide, twice  
tenscore yards in length,  
is still as Peter saw it, the steep cliff-Kremlin wall,  
with two tower gates, and a tower between, save for one thing  
more.  
Save just one thing, which is different and strange and new.  
A small square block of reddish marble, built like a Maya  
temple,  
close to the Kremlin wall, perfect in line and color,  
fitted to match the middle tower, with rows of low stone seats  
on either side.

This is the first true Thing of Beauty Revolution has created.  
This is Lenin's tomb.

Lenin shattered Tsarism and brought death to Peter's heir,  
yet it is not all difference between Lenin and Tsar Peter.  
Both had unflinching confidence in Russia's Destiny,  
and both were set to break her Oriental apathy and spur her  
with Western spurs.

"Learn from your enemies," said Lenin, and, "Tractors plus  
Electric Power spell victory."

While Peter worked in an alien shipyard, dreaming of sea-  
power and ice-free ports.

And plugged a swamp with a myriad lives to build him  
"Russia's Window on the West,"

as he boldly termed St. Petersburg, named for his patron  
saint,

to serve until passage of time and Russia's weight and  
strength

should give his country Tsargrad, as Window to West and  
South,

Tsargrad, now Istanbul, which Constantine Cæsar named  
Constantinople, Constantine's city, Asia's gate, Byzantium.

But Lenin dreamt wider dreams than Peter, called the Great.

There was nothing small in Lenin, no degrees of race or  
rule,

nothing short of world dominion under one Red Flag.

Red as Blood and the Rising Sun and Cæsar's Tyrian Crim-  
son,

is the Red Flag of Soviet Russia which flaunts from the  
Kremlin tower.

So every day come pilgrims to salute the corpse of Lenin,  
embalmed like Egyptian Pharaoh, corruptless as Russian  
saint,



## Duranty Reports Russia

pilgrims in long slow lines, thousands come day by day,  
wet or fine, sun or snow, silent in waiting lines,  
reverent as other worshipers of other gods.

Which would surely annoy Lenin, if he saw it, because he was  
an iconoclast,  
and hated Worship and what Americans call Idealism, and  
every kind of Fetish.

Yet this old side of the Square is right and true for Russia . . .  
Peter's bloody old Russia and Lenin's new devoted Rus-  
sia . . .

They harmonize exactly, Kremlin tower and Lenin tomb.  
And nothing could be more appropriate to present conditions  
in the Soviet Union  
than the monstrous empty Department Store which fills all  
the opposite side.

New and vast, utilitarian, ugly, like the Soviet State.  
Empty, that's what's wrong, no goods in the windows, neither  
food nor clothes nor tools.

They talk about Socialist Achievement and put most of the  
effort into Means of Production,  
but "When do we eat?" ask the workers, and "What shall  
we wear?" ask the peasants.

A Department Store may be ugly, but it must have goods to  
sell,  
Lenin's tomb may be Mecca and Medina, but men must eat  
or die.

If you doubt the Soviet future, if you think these shortages  
mean ruin,  
look again at Krasnaya Ploshchad; at the level granite  
paving,  
which replaced the ancient cobbles; at the sweeping open  
entrance,

which replaced the ancient archway and the shrine of Iberian Virgin,

a small and lovely shrine by the gate to Krasnaya Ploshchad . . .

no bigger than a newspaper kiosk on Paris boulevard, but sacred as Notre Dame,

the shrine of Iberian Virgin, who gave victory to Holy Russia.

Here Tsars came praying in hours of national despair . . .

Here Bolsheviks wrote first, in stone letters on red tablet, "Religion Is Opium for the People," but they left the shrine alone.

Then one morning, three years ago, they tore the shrine to pieces,

and gave the sacred emblem to the Church they feared no more.

And smashed the arch above it, careless of its grace and beauty,

and opened up a highway for men's feet to tread.

Russians may be hungry and short of clothes and comfort, but you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs.

Now turn and view both ends of the Krasnaya Ploshchad.

To the south a fantastic church, all cupolas and colored domes, older than Tsar Peter . . .

To the north a pseudo-Gothic modern building that once housed the Bishop of Moscow.

According to popular legend the first was built by Ivan, well named the Terrible;

he wanted, he said, a church unique, stranger than Babylon or Hekatompylos. . . .

And to make sure it remained unique, he blinded the architect who built it,

and the church to this day is called Church of Basil the Blind.

## Duranty Reports Russia

It remains unique, incredible, beyond De Quincey's dream  
of Babylon or Hekatompylos . . .

Untouched by Soviet iconoclasm, a subject for postcards, an  
attraction to tourists.

The Bishop's Palace is now a historical museum, and looks it.

That's the Red Square, Moscow's Red Square, Peter's Red  
Square, Lenin's Red Square. . . .

Modern, utilitarian and ugly,

Lovely, fantastic and ancient,

And something more.

The Center of a New Faith, perhaps of a New World,  
and the parade-ground of the Red Army and the Red Pro-  
letariat.

Twice a year, on the first of May and November seventh,  
anniversary of Soviet revolution,

a million trained soldiers and organized workers march  
through this square,

past Lenin's tomb, where their leaders stand on a narrow  
ledge,

past the Kremlin tower, where Peter sat, and the round scaf-  
fold, and Basil's church.

Nearly a million workers, women and youngsters and men,  
Wide and flowing like a river, from the mountains to the  
sea . . .

Roaring like a mighty river, wave on wave from noon to dusk.  
Before them come troops, not many, twenty or thirty thou-  
sand . . .

with tanks and guns and all the grim machines of modern  
war . . .

moving together and disciplined, the way only good troops  
are disciplined,

to startle foreign military attachés, Japanese and Poles.  
The square echoes the clatter of hoofs of Siberian ponies,  
tough Siberian ponies, inured to Siberian winters—can the  
Japs stand cold?  
And the Cossacks race through, whips flailing, those Cos-  
sack whips . . .  
Do the Poles remember Cossack whips in the Bad Old Days?  
And the bomb-planes roar above, in squadrons twenty square,  
one, two, three, five, ten squadrons each twenty square.  
And chasse-planes, flight after flight, like V-shaped geese on  
the wing . . .  
breaking their order to tumble and rise like pigeons . . .  
looping loop and falling leaf and Immelmann-roll,  
all the maneuvers of modern war above Moscow's Square,  
to resume formation beyond and give place to the next.  
U.S.S.R. isn't defenseless, think the Poles; a tough nut to  
crack, say the Japs.  
A place of Power is the Red Square.



# Appendix



## STALIN'S YOUTHFUL SUPPORTERS

Moscow, *January 17, 1931.*—Joseph Stalin received a great personal ovation last night when 10,000 youths, crowding the Moscow Grand Opera House beyond its capacity, rose at his entry and cheered so loudly that for once the “Internationale,” played by the band, was drowned in the tumult.

It was the opening of the ninth congress of the Communist Youth League, and eyewitnesses declare nothing like it has been seen here since Lenin died. All day long the city rang with martial music as the local Communist Youth members welcomed the “relays” who had raced on skis from the provinces, some traveling hundreds of miles, with reports and greetings to the congress.

At 5 p.m. the Theater Square and neighboring streets were choked with columns of excited “Comsomols” and by 6 p.m. every inch of space in the great theater was occupied. It was a startling scene, this meeting of the hottest and reddest supporters of communism in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics—delegates of the 3,000,000 young men and women whose conscious years have known nothing except the Bolshevik victory and have learned nothing except the Bolshevik creed.

Unless communism fails these are the heirs to Russia's future, and during recent months their enthusiasm has been kindled white hot by “shock brigade” campaigns in every factory and national enterprise, in which Communist Youth plays a leading role.

The galleries and boxes of the opera house were aflame with red bunting, and in the background of the stage was an enormous white bust of Lenin on a pedestal, thrown into relief by a wedge-shaped red banner behind it and concentric lines of red ribbon. Before the bust stood three soldiers, with peaked helmets, in dark blue uniforms crossed with double Sam Browne belts. To the right and left were three more soldiers on the steps, one below another, guarding Soviet flags.

At 6:30 the secretary of the central committee of the Communist Youth League declared the congress open and, after the election of



a president, the committee named an honorary presidium. The first member was Stalin, and as the audience roared its assent Stalin entered the stage from the wings, accompanied by Premier V. M. Molotov and L. M. Kaganovich, an assistant secretary of the Communist party. It was then that the pent-up excitement burst its bounds.

Stalin walked quietly to a table on the stage and sat down with lowered head, paying no more attention than Lenin in similar circumstances. As the uproar grew more tumultuous, he looked up and smiled, and the cheering continued for several minutes. Stalin has the Young Communists behind him in his drive to make Russia socialist, despite the fact that he smacked the "hotheads" last March.<sup>1</sup>

They have never tasted defeat, and he would never acknowledge it, so they are behind him in his struggle with the more cautious or more timid elements. He knows it, and they know it, and they showed it to the world last night.

The chairman, a tall, dark youth named Kosarev, in a sailor's uniform, called on the secretary of the Moscow Communist party, M. Kaganovich, one of the newer members of the Politburo, for the principal speech of the evening. The address lasted for three hours.

M. Kaganovich is probably the best speaker in the present Politburo, which is not over-rich in orators. He handled his excited audience with just the right mixture of patriotic appeal and praise, tempered by occasional reproof and humor, and a direct and simple analysis of the political and economic situation at home and abroad.

Thus, after a brief review of the world depression in comparison with Soviet progress, he said:

"Even rich America, which thought it had found perpetual prosperity, is now so embarrassed by unemployment that a certain town recently decided to clear the snow from its streets by men with shovels instead of by machinery—to provide work for the unemployed. Whereupon one of the newspapers suggested that, if providing work was what mattered, why not remove the snow with teaspoons and employ thousands more?"

The audience laughed to the verge of hysterics, and that anecdote will be echoed in every Russian village in the heated arguments as to whether it is humanly possible for New York skyscrapers to have

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix (page 385) on "Stalin's Speech on 'Dizziness.'"

more than fifty stories. Then M. Kaganovich discussed the Five-Year Plan and gave them a snappy epigram:

"When we began it, they said abroad, it is a joke. Now they have stopped laughing, and soon it will make them weep."

Next the speaker tackled the burning question of the intra-party controversy and poured scorn upon the "panickeers and faint hearts" who "doubt where you believe, who despair where you are hopeful, who shrink and shiver where you rush forward, who are weak where you are strong, and who, to mask their cowardice, have not hesitated to assail with foul calumny Lenin's best disciple, Stalin."

That brought the youths to their feet again cheering madly, and this time the "Internationale" thundered the climax till the foundations of the theater trembled.

A few minutes earlier the chairman had slipped unobtrusively from his seat and returned with War Commissar Voroshilov, whose alleged disagreement with the Kremlin's policy has formed the subject of the wildest rumors abroad. They have a dramatic sense, these Russians, and they know stage management. Commissar Voroshilov's entry stopped M. Kaganovich's speech as the audience rose and cheered him.

It was a psychological moment because, when the shouting died, M. Kaganovich began his review of intra-party affairs, which ended with the great tribute to Stalin. By then the speaker had his audience worked up to the limit and could dare to end with the words that drove them frantic:

"You are the vanguard of the mighty host that fights for socialism—11,500,000 organized workers, 9,000,000 in the Soviet Air League and the Red Red Cross, 3,000,000 of you Young Communists, 4,000,000 Communist Pioneers, and more than 2,000,000 members of the Communist party. You are the future conquerors of capitalism—you will be masters of the whole world."

That is "strong meat" for babes, and they ate it up and shouted the "Internationale" until one wondered whether the echo might not reach Geneva, where the "little, tired old European peoples," as Kipling's drunken Cossack called them, are now trying to unravel the Gordian knot of ancient states and modern economic rivalries.

## THE PARTY PURGE (CHISTKA)

Moscow, *August 1, 1929*.—The communists wear a harassed look these days, but not from fear of war or on account of difficulties in the economic situation or grain collections.

The whole party, numbering upward of a million and a half members, and the "candidates," are now undergoing the "chistka," and woe to the comrade who has been remiss in his party duties.

The chistka takes place in each "yacheyka," or cell, which is the party unit throughout the country, varying in size from the hundred or even two hundred members in a Moscow factory or government bureau to five in a country village.

The chistka ordeal is semi-public, and non-party members and even foreigners are often admitted.

The scene is reminiscent of a New England Puritan meeting, except that the proceedings are conducted without prayer. At a red-draped table sit three "cleansers," party officials from another yacheyka, assisted by the local secretary. Each member must rise in turn and make what amounts to a regular confession of his whole life.

There is no respect for persons, and interruptions are frequent. The head of a bureau or factory manager or regimental commander escapes no more easily than the office boy or new recruit. In fact, the opposite is rather the case, and a martinet comes in for unsparing criticism.

One quite important official was nearly "cleansed" because he showed petulance toward an old woman who interrupted a serious conference with a foreign diplomat by making a remark about the weather when she brought in the official's tea.

As a result of the long-drawn intra-party controversies, questions of doctrine predominated this year rather than private life or personal habits.

Another important feature is attendance at party meetings and performance of the "social work" required of all communists in spare time.

Thus a pretty girl in a textile factory was cleansed because she thrice "cut" social work to accompany a boy friend on the river.

Expulsions are practically decided by the meeting itself, and the vote is usually taken by acclamation, but in doubtful cases by a show of hands. Here at least the Bolsheviki have achieved democracy, and it can truly be said that being a communist in Russia is not all privilege.

Lenin's rule that no drones or sluggards might remain in the party has not been forgotten, and it is not always pleasant to pay the heavy party dues and give up any salary over 225 rubles monthly.

One often hears a man or woman, even communists themselves, say:

"I would never marry a communist. They are so busy that home life scarcely exists."

In fact, the only tangible advantage that party membership offers is the possibility of advancement to the highest positions in the country, and at that there are some like the American anarchist, Bill Shatov, who have reached responsible posts without ever joining the party. Spiritually, it is another story. The communist has the stimulus of devotion to a cause and is strengthened by the sense of comradeship and almost religious "uplift."

### THREE CLASSES OF BOLSHEVIKI

Moscow, *May 29, 1931*.—Bolsheviki do look different. There is a story, which if not "vero" is certainly "ben trovato," that a group of Russian communists went to Turkey on behalf of the Comintern several years ago and met a harsh and untimely end at Trebizond. The Soviet Foreign Office protested and Mustapha Kemal replied affably that his uncultured fellow-countrymen in Trebizond had an idea that the Bolsheviki were red all over and had forked tails to boot. "So," said Kemal, "in a spirit of honest curiosity the Trebizonders stripped these visitors and were so annoyed to find they were apparently normal that they killed them from sheer pique. I am extremely sorry, but we Turks are like that."

Subsequent activities of the Comintern in Turkey have caused no friction between the two countries, which may or may not be the point of the story.

No—Bolsheviki aren't red all over and don't have tails, but they

are nearly always quite distinct from the rest of the populace and fall into three separate categories.

To begin with, of course, they do not call themselves Bolsheviki—although the official title of the Communist party is V.K.B. in capitals with a small b in brackets, meaning All-Union Communist party (Bolshevik)—but “party members.” All three types have one thing in common—an air of energetic business hurry, of “go-getter” salesman style, and all three carry black leather brief cases.

They and the elder communist women are distinguished by a purposeful activity from the rather lackadaisical attitude of non-party Russians.

Many men wear khaki tunics like Stalin or the dark Russian blouse, and there are few collars of white linen, partly from a dislike of ostentation and partly because laundry costs enormously here. The women generally wear high-necked blouses and pay little attention to physical charm. These older Bolsheviki—who really are young as national leaders go in Europe, mostly averaging between forty and fifty-five years—have learned by years of imprisonment and exile how vapid and illusory are youth and beauty, clothes, lipsticks, and comfort as compared with doing the job to which one has devoted one's life. They are honest and incorruptible to a degree that few foreigners realize, and that hitherto was unknown in Russia, but they are neither gay nor decorative, and much of the drabness of contemporary Russian life is due to them.

Next come what might be called post-revolution communists, men and women from twenty-five to forty years old, who perform middle executive work in business and politics. All of these look tired, and are literally giving their heart's blood in a way no group save perhaps the Order of Jesuits ever did consistently anywhere in time of peace to carry out their ideals. Generally they dress better than their elders, the men wearing white collars and business suits and the women dark, practical costumes.

Finally there are the youngsters, who consider white collars an effete sign of bourgeois luxury and beards or mustaches antediluvian. In winter they wear black leather coats and breeches, as do many of the girls, and in summer khaki shirts and knickers, or, for the girls, short skirts with bare legs and a red scarf around the head. This group makes a point of being *négligé*, but is very clean and shining and athletic—which most Russians are not—and is proud of

it, although it plays games rather more as a duty than for fun, to improve bodies and souls.

Nearly all party members live ascetic lives and do not drink so much as the rest of the population, or grumble about food shortages and other difficulties. They have an air of professional optimism especially when talking to foreigners, and they work hard all day and try to study at night. To the best of the writer's knowledge there has never been a country where so many people are so determined to improve their minds by study, and this does not apply to communists only but to everybody everywhere. It is rather pathetic and in a way silly to find a graybearded old peasant attending night classes in political economy and have him tell you he only learned to read last year. Silly—yes—but when you multiply him by 100,000,000 or so it means something and helps to explain why Joseph Stalin sits in the Kremlin instead of Dmitri Pavlovich Romanov or some other Tsar.

Last, but not least, there are the communist kids—"Young Pioneers" as they are called—who are good all the way through. They have manners which their elders often regrettably lack and no remnant of the former inferiority complex hostility which often makes the older communists so difficult for foreigners to get on with. The Pioneers have a sort of honor system of self-government and discipline at school and are the freest, most upstanding, and intelligent children I have ever met anywhere. They are clean, which Russians used not be; they play games for fun and think their country is the greatest ever. They know about sex at an early age and it does not worry them—in this respect all Russians are singularly natural and matter-of-fact—and they think it is a disgrace to be rich and have other people work for you. They do not care a rap about what Americans call comfort, but they know the joy of united effort and have an opportunity to take part in national life in drives or campaigns or investigations or what-not to a degree enjoyed by no other children in the world. The girls are just the same as the boys and they are "swell," and hard as life is here in Russia this correspondent is willing to go on record that no youngsters anywhere have a better time or are likely to make more useful citizens.

## THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN—BOLSHEVIK HEAVEN

Moscow, *October 3, 1929*.—October 1 began the new Soviet fiscal year, which furnished a truly remarkable phenomenon. Newspapers without exception devoted their first three pages to adulation of the Five-Year Plan, which now enters its second year, after a considerable first year's success—so considerable that it is taken as warrant for a notable expansion for the coming twelve months over the original estimates.

What is most interesting is that this Five-Year Plan has become a sort of Bolshevik sacred cow, against which it is blasphemy to speak. It is, indeed, the completion of the communist religion—a paradise or millennium that hitherto was lacking.

It seems to be established that no religion can really be a success without an idea of heaven. From communism this idea was hitherto lacking. Now it is supplied—at least temporarily—by the Five-Year Plan.

Thus the *Workers' Gazette*—the most popular of Moscow newspapers—devotes its front page to a picture of an express train (the Soviet state) rushing along a railroad labeled the Five-Year Plan, through five cities and countrysides (one for each year) of growing beauty, until it reaches—in the year 1933—a splendid terminus, which, by the way, closely resembles the present New York City.

What is this but the same spirit that animated William Blake's famous "To build a new Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land," humanity's incurable yearning for heaven? Like the inspired fanatic, Blake, the Bolsheviks prefer a heaven upon earth to any nebulous conjecture of unknown vistas after death.

Their "paradise in five years" has captured the popular imagination, which will no more be disappointed when the fifth year is ended than a mountain climber who finds that the peak he has scaled is but a step to further heights.

From a strictly dispassionate standpoint, the Bolshevik Five-Year Plan is a superb political invention. It gives esoteric stimulus to a people whose roots are deep in mysticism, and yet corresponds to the severely practical surface of orthodox Marxism, which denies

the gods and devils of religion and immortality, to concentrate uniquely upon economic facts.

So "Pyatiletka," which is the popular and official name of the Five-Year Plan in Bolshevik theology, can boast of such a real achievement as 13,700,000 tons of oil production in the year just ended, 40,600,000 tons of coal, and 76,200,000 tons of grain, which will be respectively increased in the coming year to 16,200,000 tons, 51,600,000 tons, and 88,900,000 tons.

No country in the world ever made so swift a forward jump as Russia plans this year, but I for one would not dare to say that it cannot be accomplished. There are obstacles in plenty. The class war which the Bolsheviks have thrust on the villages to break individual ownership and bring the peasants to collective farming has in many cases become a war indeed, with arson and assassination as the opponents' weapons.

Currency expansion is racing forward—2,500,000,000 rubles of paper money is in circulation today, as compared to 1,750,000,000 rubles a year ago, without much increase in the gold reserve. But Pyatiletka needs it.

That is answer enough, and the prices of essential commodities are held down by rigid rationing. Moscow housewives grumble about the meat shortage. The *Workers' Gazette* tells them bluntly that the export of meat increased 117 percent compared with last year, to pay for foreign machinery required by Pyatiletka.

They stand in line before drygoods stores to buy cheap textiles. The answer is that textile exports have increased threefold to help pay for Pyatiletka. That word of power—Pyatiletka—conquers their complaint—so strong is the communist religion in new Russia, which boasts its contempt of all religion.

## SOCIALIST COMPETITION

Moscow, *April 9, 1929*.—The seven largest textile factories in Russia, with a total strength of 60,000 employees, signed an extraordinary compact on Sunday. The compact is based on the scheme of "socialist competition"—newly popularized by *Pravda*—in which



one factory challenges another to compete with it in reducing initial costs and increasing production within a given period.

As the challenge was first issued by the "Proletarsky" textile works of the city of Tver, its rivals from Moscow and other textile centers sent some 1500 delegates to a grand and glorious celebration of the signing of the compact in Tver. They were met at the station by a procession of 20,000 organized workers with bands and banners, and escorted in triumph to the Proletarsky Workers' Theater, where the compact was signed.

It pledged all seven factories to reduce costs by 10 percent by May 1 and to complete a skillful cost reduction and increased production plan by September 30, which is the end of the fiscal year.

A note of comedy was added by a formal meeting of the local "loafers"—that is, workers who had been publicly reprimanded for absence from work, owing to drunkenness. The meeting not only vowed voluntary reform, but gave its pledge to "acquaint their comrades with the manifold evils of vodka."

Skeptics say that the effects of this socialist competition movement will be only temporary, but they forget what a great part enthusiasm plays in the character of the Russians if they are really awakened and intelligently directed. They forget, too, how dull the present life of the average Russian worker is and how lacking it is in pageantry and excitement.

Moscow, *May 30, 1929*.—It appears that a group of twelve Proletarsky textile workers hampered production by laziness and absence from work after the May Day holiday. Accordingly they were "put on trial" by their fellow-workers in the columns of a local newspaper. The whole case was reported like a regular trial. Finally a general meeting was held to consider the verdict.

The twelve were found guilty and ordered to say a final word before sentence was passed, according to Soviet custom. They admitted their fault and promised in the future to be model workers. The sentence emphasized the seriousness of their "crime" against the community, but allowed them the opportunity to redeem the fault without further punishment by hard work for the next six months.

Moscow, *April 8, 1932*.—Something new in the field of industry has appeared this week in the Soviet Union—new and with infinite possibilities.

The huge Ford auto plant at Nizhni-Novgorod was, it appeared, falling down on the job. Big chiefs from the Kremlin investigated and “raised Cain.” The local Communist party organization and labor union organization were blamed and changed, and there were changes, too, in the executive personnel of the factory.

Then came the novelty. The Communist Youth League of the Amo factory in Moscow, which is running ahead of schedule in the production of motor trucks, took a hand in the game. They said to their Nizhni-Novgorod comrades: “You don’t seem to know how to run things and we have proved we do, so we will make you an offer. We will send several hundred of our best workers to Nizhni-Novgorod to teach you what modern mass production means. Simultaneously you will send a similar number of your boys to learn.”

The offer was accepted and approved by the authorities, and the exchange is in progress. Hitherto there had been a system of “towing,” as the Russians call it, of a backward group by more advanced comrades, whether in factories or on collective farms, but this Communist Youth exchange is new and, in addition to its direct value and its fostering of “socialist rivalry,” it gratifies the Russian love of change, which, one might almost say, insures its success from the outset.

In the writer’s opinion this may become—especially in a country of such uneven development as the U.S.S.R.—an argument for socialism of which Karl Marx never dreamed. From the immediate Soviet point of view the novelty may help solve one of the greatest current difficulties—the shortening of the “infantile malady” period, as Lenin called it, which occurs in all new enterprises everywhere, but especially so in the Soviet Union.

In the Donetz anthracite coal field, for instance, there have been forty shafts opened in the past twelve months and great progress in mechanization, yet the output does not reach expectations. Commissar of Heavy Industry Ordzhonikidze, says the mine managers are wrong in complaining that they are short of labor.

He holds the real cause of the trouble is lack of labor discipline and a tendency among the workers, both communists and non-communists, to criticize orders given by technical superiors, instead of carrying them out. M. Ordzhonikidze said much the same thing

about Nizhni-Novgorod. This contrasts somewhat curiously with talk abroad about "forced labor" in Soviet factories or anthracite mines.

It is your correspondent's opinion—which recent edicts from the Kremlin would indicate is fully shared by Soviet leaders and which certainly is shared by American engineers who have worked in Russia—that one of the principal reasons for the present difficulties, as an American expressed it, is that "labor here is too darned free and too darned talkative."

If other proof were needed, the terrific amount of "floating labor" noticeable here is sufficient. People hear there are better wages, food, or housing at such and such a mine or factory or construction camp, and they chuck their jobs and get there somehow.

If the conditions really are better, they have gained something. If not, they have had a change of scenery anyway, and there are always jobs for all. This does not help build smelters or blast furnaces or provide them with ore. In fact, it is one of the greatest of the Kremlin's problems, which the Kremlin is trying to solve by socialist competition, higher wages for better work, and the "shock brigade" system whereby a worker volunteers to stay on the job until it is finished.

All these measures do some good, but they are inadequate and will not be adequate until living standards are improved. This explains the emphasis placed by recent Communist party edicts upon the work of local party and labor union organizations and lends additional importance to the initiative of the Communist Youth League of the Amo factory.

## RENUNCIATION OF FOREIGN PROPAGANDA

Moscow, *November 19, 1932*.—New and interesting light on the Soviet attitude toward foreign labor unrest, which may well become a dominating factor in European affairs this winter, is thrown by two editorials in *Pravda*, one published last Monday and the other shortly before the anniversary of the revolution, November 7.

As the official organ of the Communist party and the mouthpiece of the Kremlin, *Pravda's* expressions of opinion are carefully pre-

pared and fully authoritative. The earlier editorial for the first time enunciated clearly what has become known as the Stalinist doctrine—that a successful socialist state can be established in the U.S.S.R. irrespective of what happens abroad, with the important corollary that Soviet example—but not interference in the affairs of other countries—shall be true to the ultimate ideal of universal socialism. In other words, the results in Russia shall count more than propaganda abroad.

The editorial did not specifically disavow so-called Bolshevik propaganda—that would be too much to expect—but made it clear that the establishment of a socialist state in the U.S.S.R. had replaced propaganda as a means and a purpose of the Kremlin policy.

The real and significant change is the natural consequence of fifteen years' experience of government. The Kremlin today, instead of being the stronghold of a handful of fanatical outlaws, has become the center of a great world power, which, whether it likes it or not, can no longer remain aloof from or be unaffected by events in the rest of the world.

Whatever happened previously, three years of depression have taught the Russians that lesson, which is not without bitterness. It is no exaggeration to say this country suffered and is still suffering from the effects of the depression little less than capitalistic nations, if only because the Soviet Union is engaged in such a prodigious outlay of national energy as the Five-Year Plan, and living standards in the Soviet Union were already so much lower than in the Western world that any further decrease involved proportionately greater hardship.

The second *Pravda* editorial, devoted to the Berlin street-car workers' strike and the Geneva riots, shows a further development of Kremlin thought. It stressed the anti-war and anti-Fascist character of both demonstrations, rather than their significance as a possible prelude to social revolution.

Superficially this may appear to be a subtle distinction, but taken jointly with the earlier editorial its implications—and causes—have first-class importance. What it means in plain English is that, instead of hailing with delight precursory signs of a world or at least a European revolution, which it is popularly supposed to be doing its utmost to foment, the Kremlin through its chosen mouthpiece interprets them in these terms:

First, as mass protests against war, and, secondly, as mass struggles

against Fascism—that is, superheated nationalism of the Hitler type, which the Kremlin fears may, if it gets the upper hand, be compelled to resort to war as a sole issue from the economic crisis.

In other words, the Kremlin feels the danger of war is now so great in Europe, especially Germany, that even the gains—from the Bolshevik point of view—of a social revolution disappear in comparison with the danger of war or become actually undesirable because any grave social disturbance at the present juncture might provoke war.

No other interpretation of the two *Pravda* editorials is possible save this strange paradox—that the Bolshevik Kremlin today regards the growth of the revolutionary movement in Europe with real anxiety.

## RADIO BROADCASTING IN MOSCOW

Moscow, *October 20, 1929*.—Moscow radio stations continue to grow in number and power, but the newest one, belonging to the Central Committee of Labor Confederations, which began operation October 14, is estimated to be 34 miles outside of the city, so it will add less to the drowning chorus of other stations. Moscow radios give really excellent music, advice about home cooking and the care of children, and quite a lot of interesting news, local and foreign. But propaganda dominates, and even the true proletarian gets cross when listening to "How the Land of the Soviets Crossed the Northern Pacific," or Moussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, or "How Best to Bathe the Baby" if he is interrupted by a raucous voice from the Comintern station denouncing Bukharin's "heretical deviations" on the ideological basis. Moscow radios have a valuable feature which they claim is unique—at half-hour intervals, from 6 to 8:30 a.m., they make a noise like an alarm clock. The cheapest clocks now cost from 15 to 20 rubles, so on this count alone the proletarian gets good value for his investment of 13 rubles in cheap receiving apparatus and an annual payment of 1 ruble.

### "SELF-CRITICISM"

Moscow, *August 16, 1930*.—Although "free speech" and a "free press" in the Western sense are unknown in Soviet Russia, Moscow newspapers are now indulging in such a loud chorus of complaints, rebukes, and pessimism as has probably not been equaled since Jeremiah was the "official spokesman" of Israel.

To read the newspapers one would suppose the country was headed straight to perdition. "The July and August grain collections are only 40 percent of the estimate"—"the battle for grain is our gravest problem"—"transport deficiencies"—"traffic jams threaten the Five-Year Plan" or "14,000 accidents in six months"—"under-production in the coal mines"—"chaos in co-operative distribution"—"shortage of building materials"—"meat shortage, fish shortage, commodity shortage"—"squabbles over the harvest distribution in the collectives"—"bureaucracy, red tape, inefficiency, indiscipline, drunkenness, loafing."

It is a dark and gloomy picture. This the Russians call "self-criticism," and they have mobilized a whole army of worker and village correspondents whose special duty is to expose weaknesses, abuses, and shortcomings without fear or favor.

There are 500,000 worker-correspondents in the factories who contribute to the daily press, apart from the fact that each factory, indeed each Soviet institution, has its own "wall newspaper" or weekly "house organ," as it would be called in the United States. There are upward of 1,000,000 village correspondents, and each village has its "wall newspaper," while the larger collective farms have regular printed sheets.

It is said the first thing Joseph Stalin does every morning on reaching his office is to read through a mass of reports—"svodki," they call them—received from all over the country and carefully graded and piled in different heaps according to the subject about the reactions of the workers and peasants to this or that measure or about the general situation.

## THE OPENING OF THE TURKSIB RAILWAY

Moscow, *April 14, 1930.*—The greatest industrial undertaking of the New Russia will be accomplished next Sunday when the steel meets on the "Turksib" railway, linking the grain, meat, and timber regions of Siberia with the rice and cotton areas of Turkestan.

The railroad traverses a region of great mineral wealth through the Altai mountains in the north, and Lake Balkash, which will be the Soviet Lake Superior, in the south central section. Its political and strategic importance is scarcely less considerable, as it borders the frontier of Chinese Turkestan, which is a rich area almost cut off from the rest of China by the Gobi desert. The railroad is little more than 1100 miles long, but it is the first Soviet enterprise to be built below the estimated cost and in less than scheduled time.

Credit is due to the former Chicago anarchist, Bill Shatov, who is one of the most picturesque figures of the modern world. Since his return in 1918 to Russia, where he was born, Shatov has been one of the chief Soviet "pinch hitters" in divers emergencies.

He saved Petrograd (now Leningrad) from Yudenich. Then he held executive posts in the Oil Trust and Metal Trust and for a time ran a bank in Rostov. But his superabundant energy and driving power found a true outlet in the Turksib railway. Floods, lukewarm technicians, food and material shortages, tropical heat and icy blizzards—all were overcome and the road completed six months ahead of time.

ARIS, KAZAKSTAN,<sup>1</sup> EN ROUTE, *April 30, 1930.*—A strange sight is this little railway junction station in the Hungry Steppe. Its white buildings stand out in the sharp southern sunlight, and the low platforms are crowded with natives milling about in swarms of a hundred or two, around the "delegates" from the train from Moscow to inaugurate the Turksib railway.

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<sup>1</sup> The Soviet Republic of Kazakstan stretches for 1000 miles or more to the Ural and Altai mountains. It is larger than all of Europe outside of European Russia and is inhabited chiefly by nomad herdsmen who are descended from the raiders under Genghis Khan and Tamerlane.

Central Asia for centuries has been a melting pot of nationalities, and here, where links from the north, east, and west meet, there are picturesque representatives of a hundred tribes whose ancestors rode with Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, or with Rurik in long ships from Scandinavia.

You see an old Turkoman with a round, colored Tatar skullcap and a bunch of wild red turekid under his left ear. Beside him is a Red Army boy of pure Nordic type, then a Kirghiz in a big sheepskin hat, with huge earflaps and that ancient peak in the center which the Red Army adopted. Kazaks—not Cossacks—stand about in round hats bordered with fur or sheepskin, and with black felt crowns. So were the Mongols of Genghis attired.

One cannot travel through the fertile fields of Pensa and Sampara without realizing that collective farming may be the salvation of Russia. Collective farms, and still more huge state farms in the Orenburg region, compare with the poor individual peasant strips as white with black. Yet how difficult to make this mighty change!

This trip is at once a picture of Russia's incredible poverty and incredible possibilities. Take Emba, for instance—an arid way-station amid deserts and dunes, with nothing but new buildings and a group of oil tanks to mark it from the rest of the Hungry Steppe. Yet Emba is the center of one of the richest potential oil fields in the world.

In the bright sunshine and the tempered cool winds from the hills, 300 nomads gathered in the square behind the depot. Besides them the Russian railroad workers and their families look drab and out of place. The Kazaks ride ponies and camels, and one elder sits proudly astride a yak, saddled and bridled, with his wife behind him in a gorgeous purple robe and with a white turban forty yards long wrapped around her head, with streamers down the back.

Unlike other citizens of Russia these nomads are virtually exempt from taxation, and it is said a great majority of them trekked off into the pathless steppe when the railroad came, but that they are gradually beginning to drift back.

AINIBULAK, KAZAKSTAN, *May 1, 1930*.—Steel met here today on the Turksib railway when Bill Shatov, the Japanese communist Katayama, and representatives of the local central governments drove in the last spikes in an almost supernatural amphitheater of rolling



hills. Red-draped stands crowned the cutting above the junction point, and beyond them 10,000 people were massed on the hillside, their faces and costumes typical of Russia's vast racial conglomerate.

The nomads from the steppe eyed the loud-speakers with superstitious awe as the railroad executives told how the line had been built and the government orators explained its purpose and incalculable importance in the future development not of this region alone but of the whole Soviet Union.

Then as a band played the "Internationale" they presented decorations of the Red Flag of Labor to Shatov and a dozen others of the workers on the railroad. The crowd surged forward and picked up Shatov's 200 pounds like a feather and carried him down the steep steps and there, right over the junction point, tossed him high in the air, the traditional sign of respect and friendship of the Russian soldiers, while the crowd shouted, the Kazaks yelled, and a metal monoplane roaring overhead swooped down a scant fifty feet from the ground.

SAMARKAND, UZBEKISTAN, *May 18, 1930*.—"Not everyone," said an old Roman proverb, "has the luck to visit Corinth"—that ancient city of luxury and culture, whose courtesans were no less famous than its scholars. Yet Corinth was as easy for the Romans to visit as Paris is for Americans—it was just a question of having the price of a round trip.

Samarkand is different—hidden away in the heart of Russian Asia and until now shut off by the jealousy of Tsars and Soviet alike from all save a rare few of the luckiest. Golden Samarkand—its name alone blazes with romance—is one of those dream cities which come true. The new Russian town with its wide streets, modern buildings, and tall trees springs up from the surrounding desert like a green jewel on a withered hand. The native town is superb with the ruins of buildings erected by Tamerlane and Ulakbek, his grandson—one could spend years here and not see all its marvels or explore its mysteries.

On the outskirts of the old town one sees a dome at once, burning bright in the Asian sun, with the tiles once blue now motley and earth-colored from mud-baked bricks underneath. A gate to the garden, at the end of which the tomb of Tamerlane lies, is a glory of blue-white tiles partly ruined by earthquakes but still lovely and gra-

cious. Then the oblong garden, forty by twenty yards, scented with locust trees and flowers. And then the little building which was old before America was discovered, where are hidden the remains of Tamerlane under an Arabic inscription: "Here lies the conqueror of the world."

It is incredibly peaceful here in the twilight, which the windows carved in cedarwood fretwork let in from the glaring sun outside. Unexpectedly an old man in a long, colored Eastern robe, carrying a candle, appears and motions toward a stone stairs leading to a crypt below. Here is Tamerlane's real tomb—a long slab of white marble all covered with Arabic engravings in this cool dark vault. Neither the resting place of Napoleon in the garish Invalides of Paris nor the squat building where Russians throng to pay homage to Lenin, nor Westminster Abbey where England buries her heroes, can compare in dignity or tranquil beauty with this last home of Tamerlane. . . .

Neither Rome nor Athens knew a monument nobler or lovelier than that which Tamerlane built in his old age for the wife of his youth, Bibi Kahanum. It is badly ruined now by time, earthquakes, and subsequent invaders, and many of the colored tiles which once covered it throughout lie in pieces on the dusty ground; but the broken dome of the mosque rivals the sky in its green-blue beauty, and the huge Arabian arch before it, 140 feet high, still has enough traces of bright mosaic to show what it once was.

Tamerlane was old and arch-tyrannical, with a surfeit of limitless power when he built this monument. . . .

That was long ago and Soviet Russia is new and cares little for the old things. But as we passed out from that old courtyard, strange wailing cries arose from one of the few pillars that have survived time, earthquakes, and invaders. It was a mullah calling the faithful to evensong and prayer—in Soviet Samarkand.

## RELIGION UNDER STALIN

Moscow, *April 11, 1929*.—The Soviet Government has decided upon a new drive against religious influence, whose growth in recent times has gravely occupied the attention of the Kremlin. The action

of the Soviet takes the form of "a new law regarding religious units," which has just been approved by the Central Executive Committee.

Although the preamble states that the purpose of the law is to correlate and define the existing legislation concerning the churches and although, at first sight, it appears not to be materially different from previous enactments, a more careful study reveals two clauses of which the possibilities are almost unlimited.

Before analyzing the new law, it is necessary to explain the reasons that called it into being. In the years of 1921 to 1925 the Soviet government weakened the influence of the Orthodox church by two methods—first of all by the encouragement of the so-called "Living Church," a reformist movement which produced a schism, especially in the cities, and, secondly, by allowing considerable freedom of action to "sectarian bodies" such as Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans, etc., whose influence would, it was hoped, combat that of the Orthodox church.

Both plans worked, but the second had an unexpected result. The sectaries, especially the Baptists, began to grow at—to the Bolsheviki—an alarming rate. And what was more, the Orthodox church began to adopt the sectaries' methods; that is, the more sincere and better-trained clergy began to develop welfare and social work and take a direct interest in their parishioners, a "religious danger" which, the spokesmen of the new law declare, coincides with and will become the backbone of a nation-wide opposition—particularly among the peasants—to the Kremlin's socialization program.

The new law is devised to curb this and is described in the following manner: one clause declares that the "activity of all religious units be confined to the exercise of religion, and that they be not permitted any economic or cultural work which exceeds the limits of their ministry to the spiritual needs of Soviet citizens."

Thus, at one swoop, all handicraft groups and the recreational and social work of the churches are prohibited, work which has been gaining many adherents not only in the villages but (in the case of the Baptists) in such proletarian strongholds as the Putilov works at Leningrad, which might be called the cradle of the Bolshevik revolution. But the law goes further. Another clause states:

"The houses of prayer and other religious property and the clergy shall minister to the believers of the locality adjoining the said buildings" (that is, to that congregation).

The purpose of this clause is clear enough, and its strict application will doubtless depend upon circumstances. If words mean anything, the clause declares that a member of a congregation cannot attend the services in the church of another congregation.

From the Bolshevik point of view, this has two advantages. First, it will enforce the registration of all members of a congregation—which may prove useful. Second, it will cut all the religious denominations into tiny pieces—lonely islands in a Red sea, so to speak.

Moscow, *July 2, 1929*.—Under a four-column headline “Baptist outburst on Moscow River,” today’s *Working Moscow* fulminates against a mass baptismal ceremony—the Russian Baptists practice total immersion—which lasted from six o’clock until ten o’clock last Sunday morning.

The newspaper report begins:

“Right here in Moscow—in the summer of 1929, on June 30—with the All-Union Atheist Convention just ended and the delegates not yet back home—with the Soviet Congress but a month ago having passed a constitutional amendment limiting religious propaganda—and what do we see? An incredible proceeding—a mass baptism by a religious cult in the Moscow river—in the heart of the proletarian section of the city—under the walls of the Triangle brewery.”

In a similar staccato the writer runs on for four and a half columns, with photographs showing a magnificent Baptist elder with a long white beard conducting a service, immersing the white-clad neophytes and then—the crowning outrage—pitching a tent for the participants to dress in under the very walls of the proletarian brewery.

The reporter embellished his narrative with such words as “incredible,” “inexplicable,” and “intolerable,” but he reserves not his least severe strictures for the Moscow Police Department which gave a permit to the Baptists. For some obscure reason the fact that the baptism was held beneath the brewery walls rouses the Soviet reporter almost to frenzy. He makes this the leitmotif of his tirade against the “religious challenge to the Moscow workers.”

This affair, however, is more serious than it sounds. It is an incident in the general “leftward swing” that has been such a prominent feature of the Soviet policy during recent months. The Nepmen, the kulaks, and the religious cults of all kinds, from Buddhists

to Baptists, are now listed as "class enemies," against whom must be waged a pitiless war for socialism.

Moscow, *July 30, 1929*.—An old peasant woman fell on her knees in the street and began to pray, "Holy Heaven, pity us; they are smashing our God-Mother's house." A khaki-clad policeman took her arm.

"Now, then, Babushka," he said mildly, "you can't make a fuss here. Come on, now; take your fruit and be off to your business."

He picked up the woman and her basket together and hustled her along around the corner past the new pine wall.

It was eight o'clock this morning. Behind that wall, hastily erected after midnight, a wrecking gang had been busy since three o'clock destroying the famous House of the God-Mother, the Chapel of the Iberian Virgin at the Iversky gate of Moscow's Red Square.

In this tiny chapel, 6 feet by 6, with its lovely dark blue roof be-decked like a summer night with golden stars, Ivan the Terrible sought Heaven's grace after murdering his son. Here Alexander I knelt in prayer while Napoleon's cannon thundered in the grim battle of Moskva. Here, six months later, after Napoleon's downfall, Alexander gave thanks for victory. When the great war broke out, Nicholas II sought here the aid of Heaven for Holy Russia, and here, last of all, the Cossack General Kaledin begged for victory over the "Red atheists."

On the wall above, the triumphant Bolsheviki, who had slain General Kaledin and Nicholas II and successfully defied the powers and principalities of this world, had written boldly in white letters on a red background, "Religion is opium for the people."

The Iberian shrine was as lovely as a blue lily, but in this thirteenth year of the Soviet Socialist Republics it had become a nuisance, the haunt of unclean beggars, "a relic of outworn superstition." The little shrine was set against the central pillars of the old Boyar House, which bridged over two archways on each side of the entrance to Red Square.

From the little old house rise small twin spires, each crowned with the imperial double-headed eagles. Those spires will remain, but the central pillar must give way to a slim steel girder. "The venerated icon picture of the God-Mother," said M. Smydovich, "and

the sacred vessels of the shrine and the golden candlesticks will be given to church authorities. This," he added, "was not vandalism but progress, because the whole gateway must be remodeled to facilitate traffic."

So they barred the Iversky gate with wooden walls and tore down the ancient shrine in five short hours. Nothing remains now save a blackened hole like the site of a fireplace. Twenty years ago, or 200 years ago, the news would have smitten Moscow like a thunderbolt. Today no one cares. A few children pass and peer through the wooden wall. An old man crosses himself, and that is all.

Save for the one peasant woman in the early morning there was no need for the police to say more than, "Keep moving, there," to little groups of curious idlers. Antiquarians will lament this passing of a choice fragment of old Russian beauty. New Russia does not care. Its past is dead and it is glad.

Moscow, *February 27, 1930*.—The sudden outbreak of denunciation abroad regarding the alleged persecution of the church by the Soviet has caused considerable surprise here, because the anti-religious policy described abroad as persecution is neither new nor was it especially marked during the recent period.

It is true that kulak opposition to the collective farm movement found considerable support from the rural clergy, who have always been a reactionary force in rural Russia. The peasants were told by the priests as recently as a month ago that God would spoil the harvest of the collectives, and it constantly happened, when a kulak group resisted collectivization by arson or attacks upon Soviet workers, that the local priest was involved.

This caused identification in the mind of the Soviet authorities of priests with the kulak enemies, which doubtless led to an increase of pressure upon the church as the "class war in the villages" grew more intense. This, however, reached its height some months ago, and such things as the irreligious processions of young atheists, of which the Pope complains, are no novelty—indeed the writer witnessed one such at Christmas in 1924. In other words, the anti-religious movement is not a sudden outburst during recent weeks but a progressive process continuing for several years, which perhaps has not yet reached its culmination.

One of the first impressions of any visitor to Russia is the extraordinary number of churches in the cities and towns, and in fact each village in the country appears nothing more than a cluster of mud huts around a lofty and gilded stone church. One travels thousands of miles across Siberia with the memory of painted church after church as the sole landmark or human habitation. In contrast to France and England, where the château or country mansion is the figure of the landscape, Russia presents churches in proof of the former power of the greatest instrument of Tsarist autocracy, the Orthodox church.

It is in this light that the Bolsheviki regard the church today, and their harshness toward it on this account is no less deep-rooted than their scarcely self-understood feeling that communism itself is a new iconoclastic religion hostile to older religions, whether Christian, Jewish, or Mohammedan. Nevertheless, as things are at present, it cannot be said that church worship is impossible for the inhabitants of cities or even small towns. Many churches have been demolished and others converted into clubs, granaries, etc., but enough still remain for the needs of the steadily diminishing number of believers.

In the villages, however, it now often happens that utilization of the church for other purposes and expulsion of the priest make what one might call religious life utterly impossible. Maybe the same thing is already occurring in the smallest towns, but what the writer has seen personally in churchless villages holds good for any small community deprived of the "benefit of clergy."

Almost always the first reaction of the majority of the population to the suppression of religious life is of anxiety. They, especially the older people, feel lost without a familiar custom. The younger people, especially the women, feel somehow that marriage, or baptism of their children, or burial, the three great events in the life of the Russian women, cannot be "right" without the church's sanction.

Gradually, however, the superstitious peasants find that registry of marriage, birth, and death at the bureau of the local Soviet is no less real from the practical viewpoint and entails little or no expense, whereas the priest mulcted the faithful to the extent he thought their social position would bear. Even in villages that still have churches, marriages outside the church have begun to reach 70 percent. The same applies to baptisms and burials.

The Russian peasants—indeed the whole Russian proletariat—have begun to feel that they can do without the church, which they

never really understood. Services were conducted in the Slavonic language, which is more remote from modern Russian than Chaucerian English is from present New York. The church had lost touch with the masses, and its detractors assert that it played no helpful role in the national life.

On the other hand, the communists generally try—and in many cases succeed—to provide exactly that form of community center which is now being developed by broad-minded churchmen in America and elsewhere. Where in a village or urban factory district a church is converted into a club, it becomes a real factor in community life.

Strangely enough, too, a "Lenin corner," which exists in every club, serves the religious side of human nature. It is a different, atheistic, humanitarian religion, but it retains an idealistic appeal. Only for older people is the loss of the church a tragedy, especially for those whom the revolution has swept away from their formerly assured positions. But to the old—old people, old ways, old thoughts, the old regime—New Russia is merciless.

Moscow, *February 27, 1930.*—Despite the break with the church, life in Soviet Russia goes on much the same as before. People marry, baptize their children, and bury their dead without benefit of clergy, but they cannot wholly forget the ceremonial attached to such events.

In Moscow those who wish may worship, marry, have funerals or baptisms. But it seems that, where a church is demolished or transformed into a club, its former parishioners, instead of seeking another church, accommodate themselves to the churchless life.

I live in the workers' quarter of Moscow, where, of five neighboring churches, one has been demolished, three have been changed into clubs, and one remains for service. Today I attended a wedding of the respectable classes, whose position is equivalent to that of an American worker earning \$50 a week. The bride's mother, a widow, was a regular attendant at one of the churches which has now become a club. The bridegroom's parents live in a Volga village.

The proceedings were typical of the new Russia. First of all, without friends or witnesses, the young couple went to the "Zags"—a composite initial word meaning Soviet marriage bureau—paid a small registration fee, and were legally married.

I arrived before they returned, and mamma sat bewailing the ab-



sence of a church ceremony until one of her friends said: "But a church ceremony would cost thirty rubles. This costs thirty kopecks." Mamma was cheered up and looked complacently at the table covered with food and wine. To a primitive people like the Russians, marriage, baptism, birth, and death are occasions for feasting. That still holds good, despite hard times and the commodity shortage.

The wedded couple returned, and the feast began. To me it was exactly like a French wedding I once attended at Porte Maillot, where a young chauffeur married the daughter of a local storekeeper. In that case, the couple first went to the church, then, according to the French law, to the town hall for their civil ceremony. The bride's father said sadly: "This religious stuff has cost me thousands of francs, and after all it isn't worth it." Then they had a banquet which cost him some more money, just as the Russian mother-in-law today spent money for her daughter's wedding.

It was very gay and cheerful, and I am regretfully forced to the conclusion that, from the point of view of a Russian—or a Frenchman or other European—the proletarian religious ceremony represents only an extra expense and something which one ought to do in order to appear respectable in the eyes of one's neighbors.

In former years an attempt was made here to replace the church ceremonial of baptism with Bolshevik rites. I remember once when Bukharin and Lenin's sister and Isadora Duncan were mobilized to celebrate the "Red christening" of some Bolshevik child. It was impressive and, from the outside viewpoint, interesting. But these "Red christenings" did not catch on with the masses, because the masses do not really like such functions, whether carried on by the church or by communists. To them a baptism or a marriage is a family party in which the church or the state should play a purely formal role. If—as formerly in Russia—the church requires money, they pay in deference to public opinion, but are not particularly pleased to do so.

State functions may be less expensive, but are no less embarrassing, and therefore unpleasant to these humble people. They need some legal approval of their births, deaths, and marriages, which the Soviet state provides, but they regard them as their own private affairs, and any interference by the church or the state is merely an annoyance and expense.

In one respect, however, the churchless system hits the population hard. I mean when they come to die. The Russian Orthodox church

does not hold with the extreme unction of Roman Catholicism, but it admits a deathbed confession and remission by the priest of one's sins to let the sinner die more easily. Here, and here only, Bolshevism—the communist religion—can offer no equivalent.

Moscow, *April 4, 1930*. The following is an authentic case which recently occurred in a Volga village:

The local priest was up to date and enthusiastic, which is not always so in Russian villages. He did not fast, like many of his colleagues, despair of the church in a communist state, or attempt to engage in futile opposition, but tried to reconcile his congregation to the facts of their present existence.

One Sunday he chose as the theme of his sermon the story of Ananias and Sapphira who fell dead before Peter because they had sold a piece of land, lied about its price, and withheld part of the money from the common fund. This, the priest said, was like the peasant who before joining a collective sold his cow or his horse instead of contributing it for the common weal. He enlarged upon the communism of the early Christians and quoted texts to show the duty of obedience to authority.

The following night the priest was shot dead by an unknown person as the clergyman was entering a barn to see whether it was suitable for the storage of newly collected seed grain. A week later the church "caught fire" and burned to the ground. The only man in the village who tried to put the fire out was the president of the local Soviet. The rest of the villagers watched the conflagration through their cottage windows.

No legal proceedings have followed, and the murder of the priest remains unpunished, but it is common gossip in the village that the killing was inspired by kulaks.

This cruel little drama gives the measure of the bitterness of "class warfare" in the Russian countryside. Generally speaking, the local clergy is opposed to the government's measures more or less openly, which no doubt is the reason for the renewal of the communist drive against religion. But there is another side to the picture—kulak opposition is often no less ruthless than the communist hotheads whom Joseph Stalin denounced during March (1930).

Moscow, *April 12, 1931*.—For a brief hour or two last night a visitor here might have believed that the clock of the revolution had been put back as believers thronged the churches, unmolested, for the Easter midnight mass of the Orthodox churches. But the bells that had been the glory of pre-revolutionary Moscow were silent—not on a flight to Rome, according to the ancient legend, but broken up and melted to serve the Five-Year Plan of Bolshevik materialism.

And only a scant few of the score of Moscow churches—once numbered at forty times forty—were open for worship, though some that have been converted to workers' clubs were ablaze with lights and music.

Religion is dying in Moscow and the churches left were enough for the small but faithful remnant, mostly old and saddened people, though here and there one saw the burning eyes of a zealous youth or the broad shoulders of peasants. The great Cathedral of Christ the Redeemer was crowded, and those who followed the service attentively and carried candles, later to be blessed, outnumbered the mere onlookers.

Compared with previous years, such anti-religious demonstrations as occurred were mild, and at the churches the old ceremonial processions in the streets in the symbolical search for the Saviour's body were held inside the buildings. In some of the smaller churches the outside ceremony was carried out, but a high wind extinguished the candles and there was no chance for the old custom of carrying a blessed candle home with the conviction that a year's good luck would follow if the candle did not blow out.

The writer well remembers the sight at the end of the Nevsky Prospekt in the then city of Petrograd at Eastertime in 1923, when the stream of worshipers from the Kazan Cathedral, each shading a tiny flame with his hand, met a mighty river flowing from St. Isaac's, until it seemed the whole square was filled with flickering sparks. Today St. Isaac's, the costliest fane in the old holy Russia, is an atheist museum, reopened just recently.

The Soviet press and the *Godless Magazine* complain of slackened interest in the atheist campaign. It is true, but it is of no benefit to the church, which has now grown too feeble for the Kremlin artillery. The public's attention is being directed this year, so far as Easter is concerned, to the need for work in the factories and fields, not to anti-religious demonstrations.

Under the slogans, "Easter means extra output," or "One hun-

dred percent attendance at work on Easter Sunday," or "A full day's sowing or preparation for sowing is the best answer to priests and kulaks," the masses are being urged to forget the popular side of the Easter holiday—a great national feast when everyone, however poor, ate and drank to repletion.

In socialist eyes it was the Tsarist equivalent of the old Roman saturnalia, where Dives and Lazarus met and rejoiced on terms of brief equality. There is little feasting in Russia this year, and with reason, but there are no signs that the Kremlin's determination is weakening or that the masses are declining to follow. If Kuroki and Foch were right, that in the final event battles are won by nerve, then the Five-Year Plan will win.

Personal investigations in Moscow factories show that no action, direct or indirect, is taken against workers who attend church. On the other hand, it is freely admitted that they are exposed to a good deal of mockery by their comrades, and one man expressed the general opinion as follows:

"We don't care much about the church and wouldn't have gone in the old days unless we had to. Now no one gets a black mark in the eyes of the boss if he fails to go to church, but if he does go his friends and even his children call him silly and old-fashioned. Among the workers hardly anyone goes to church except the old women, and I say, Why shouldn't they if they want to? This is a free country, isn't it?"

## LIQUIDATION OF THE KULAK

Moscow, *January 23, 1930.*—The anniversary of Lenin's death was notable for an editorial signed by M. Stalin which appeared in the Red Army newspaper *Red Star*, in which the communist leader carefully explained the meaning of the phrase, "liquidation of the kulak as a class," which is the keynote of the Kremlin's revised economic policy. M. Stalin said:

"It is necessary to smash in open combat the opposition of this class and to deprive it of the productive sources of its existence and development—the free use of land, the means of production, the right to hire labor, etc. The present policy in the country is not a prolongation of policy, but a violent change from the old policy

of limiting capitalist elements in the villages to a new policy of liquidating the kulak as a class."

A recent editorial in the *New York Times* discussing M. Stalin's agrarian policy charitably assumed that the process of liquidating the kulaks would mean their reduction to the average peasant status by deprivation of their land and other privileges, after which they would enter the collective movement as poor or middle peasants. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is proposed to stamp them out root and branch, so that the place where they were may know them no more. Not only are they refused admission to the collectives, but they are being expelled if they manage to join.

The press here Wednesday carried a resolution adopted by 450 delegates from the collectives of one of the counties of Moscow province. The delegates resolved to "devote all efforts to this achievement by the end of spring—that not one kulak, priest, Nepman, or trader be left in our country."

Moscow, *January 26, 1930*.—To define further the brutal truth, take the conclusion to an article in *Red Star*, in which the writer says:

"What will become of the kulak after his liquidation as a class? To us it is all one—let him fall under the first passing automobile or spend the rest of his life in exile—anything, provided he disappears from our midst."

The fact is that the revised policy puts the kulaks, private traders, and servants of the religious cults up against a wall. In the urban centers the Nepman, or small capitalist, is deprived of his apartment, his property, including his furniture, and is even forbidden to live in any large city. It is done legally on a taxation basis, but it amounts to expropriation, differing only in form from the nationalization of apartments and other property, which occurred in the early days of the revolution.

The same things happen to the kulaks in the villages. It is a wholesale and ruthless carrying out of what the word "liquidation" means in Russian. Lenin's widow, Mme. Krupskaya, alone has raised her voice in protest, not against liquidation as such, which she declares she approves, but on behalf of the children of the "doomed classes."

"To expel the children of the class enemies from the crowded schools in order to give places to the children of workers and peas-

ants," writes Mme. Krupskaya, "is correct enough, but it is time to consider the social problem involved. Do we wish to create millions of new homeless waifs as a shame and a burden to the country?"

In answer to your correspondent's inquiries, the authorities said the "dispossessed classes" could gradually regain their standing by work in the lumber camps or on construction projects where the labor demand exceeds the supply. In any other country the problem would seem terrific, but actually in Russia things do not move with the implacable rapidity of the Kremlin decrees. The liquidation process probably will be gradual and its aftermath less difficult than it would be elsewhere. During the early years of communism the same process occurred on a greater scale, working worse hardships.

From the general standpoint the revised economic policy seems far from unpopular. In the cities the overcrowding is so great that the news that hundreds or thousands of apartments will be vacated by the expulsion of Nepman tenants is good news to all. Similarly, the poor peasants are delighted to hear that the best land in the village, with a mill or dairy attached, is to become the property of the new collective.

Nor does the anti-religious movement seem to meet opposition. On the contrary, the workers of one factory in Moscow celebrated Lenin's anniversary by tearing down the famous monastery of Saint Simon in order that it may be replaced by a communal house with a clubroom, theater, restaurants, nurseries, sports centers, and a park.

### STALIN'S SPEECH ON "DIZZINESS"

Moscow, *March 2, 1930*.—Joseph Stalin put the brake on communist enthusiasm in a remarkable article published in all newspapers here today. Its statesmanship appears to put Stalin on a level with Lenin himself, and it is unquestionably the most important pronouncement made in Russia for several years.

Under the title "Dizziness from Successes," Stalin begins by saying that more than 50 percent of the peasant holdings now have been collectivized and more than 3,500,000 tons, or more than 90 percent of the program, of cleaned seed already have been distributed to the collectives for spring sowing. Such a result appeared quite impossible

three weeks ago, and it is perhaps the greatest *tour de force* in the whole history of the Bolshevik party, as Stalin and his readers well know.

"Our success," Stalin continues, "already is producing a dangerous spirit of glorification and over-confidence. Communists are beginning to feel and say, 'We can work miracles—nothing is too hard for us.' Optimism is good, but to let it turn our heads is bad. Some of our comrades have already had their heads turned and have begun to make errors, which are not only not practical and non-Leninist, but they are actually playing into the hands of our enemies. This tendency must be checked immediately."

Stalin goes on to point out the two principal dangers of an over-confident attitude as, first, the idea that collectives can successfully be established in regions as yet economically unsuitable, such as Turkestan or the extreme northern part of Russia, and, secondly, that collectivization must be pushed immediately to the extreme of communism and even pigs, poultry, and dwellings shared in the collective. It is a dangerous mistake and it is playing the enemies' game, says Stalin, to try to collectivize "by military force" unsuitable regions.

It is equally wrong, he says, to attempt suddenly to change the *artel* system—the *artel* is the typical peasant collective under which land, horses, cows, plows, and the like are united for the common benefit, but homes, sheep, goats, pigs, and poultry remain individual property—into a 100 percent commune in which everything is shared with everyone. Stalin slashes at those "comrades who seem to believe that a communist Utopia can be established in the villages by bureaucratic ordinances," and he warns them that the untimely attempts at super-socialization must be stopped at once.

The basic success of the collective movement, he says, lies in the fact that it is largely voluntary on the part of the peasants. To force them further, he holds, would be a fatal and autocratic error and would imply a rupture between the Communist party and the masses it controls, whereas in reality its strength and its whole reason for existence are based upon a close connection with and work for the masses.

"Some of our comrades," says Stalin sarcastically, "think they can start a collective by pulling down church bells" (that is, demolishing the churches) "and then they call themselves r-r-revolutionaries (with three r's)."

## STALIN'S "PROGRAM SPEECH," JUNE 1931

Moscow, *July 5, 1931*.—A general overhauling of conditions applying to labor and industry, representing significant changes and in some cases wide differences from previous practices of socialistic development, was proposed by Joseph Stalin in his latest public pronouncement.

He called for a reversal of the policy of the "iron fist" toward members of the "old bourgeois industrial intelligentsia" and adoption of an attitude welcoming them into the service of the state.

He outlined a future program, embracing the following six points:

Readjustment of wages to make the scale commensurate with the type of labor performed, and to halt workers from shifting from one place to another to improve their living conditions.

Remedy of the growing labor shortage by attracting more peasants to industries as agriculture progresses toward mechanization.

Improvement of the organization of labor in industry in order to distribute the proper strength among factories and to end "irresponsible" methods.

To have the working class develop its own "intelligentsia" of such skilled workers as engineers and technicians.

To change the policy toward specialists of the old order to attract more of them to industry.

To increase the interior sources of industry and develop the piece-work system.

He also proposed the reversal to individualistic from collective business administration, saying that "new conditions demand new methods of work and leadership."

Reorganization of the present system of wages is necessary, he added, if the shifting of labor is to be prevented.

"In many of our factories the wage system is such as to leave no difference between the skilled and unskilled worker and between hard and easy labor," he said. "This leads to unskilled workers showing no interest in raising their qualifications, and skilled workers move from factory to factory in search of a place where their qualifications will be more valued.

"To give this shifting a free hand would undermine our industry,



wreck our plan of production, and stop improvement in the quality of manufactured goods. We must destroy such equal wages. It is unbearable to see the locomotive driver receiving the same wages as a bookkeeper."

## STALIN ON INDIVIDUALISM

Moscow, *November 13, 1931*.—The idea that Soviet Russia is gradually reverting to individualism, if not to capitalism itself in a modified form, seems to be rooted in the American mind.

Perhaps unintentionally, one of the popular American weeklies published a clever and amusing article about this country in its number of November 7, the anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution. That writer concluded: "There is a competitive streak in human nature that cannot be done away with by law. Stalin himself knows its truth and has to admit it. Only recently he did away with equality and decreed that the man who did the best work should get the most pay. That means the end of communism. The minute you quit the dead level and put a premium on superior ability or industry you get right back to capitalism and the age-old competitive struggle."

This view seems typical of the general American sentiment, but in my opinion it is wrong, if only because it fails to take into account the profound difference between the American and Russian character, or, perhaps, it would be more correct to say between American and Russian circumstances of life and environment, by which, according to Marxist doctrine, character is formed.

First, it must be remembered that nine-tenths of the present population of the Soviet nation has never known at all what Americans mean by competition and individual opportunity. Under the old system the number of workers per 100 who had a chance to get ahead could be counted on the fingers of one hand, and the proportion was much lower among the peasants, even when those two classes were about 85 percent of the population, the rest being traders, officials, and the "upper class."

The last two categories have ceased to exist today. They have fled into exile, been killed or "socially suppressed." The top section of the

trading class shared the same fate, and the rest have been absorbed into the Soviet machine.

It is thus clear that fully 90 percent of the present population has never known any benefits from individualism—it is scarcely known, indeed, that there could be benefits. The average American will find it hard to believe this, but it is true of Russia nevertheless.

Secondly, the whole force of the dominant Bolshevik party, which in practice is intensely autocratic and organized with military discipline, is bent upon putting over collectivism and crushing individualism in the sense in which individualism implies personal gain by making others work for one, not, however, in the sense of personal reward for one's own good work.

Take, for instance, the hypothetical case of Thomas A. Edison under the present Soviet system. He would get from his own inventions not only honor but monetary reward. He would be placed in charge of an invention department at a high salary, receive quarters for his own use, an automobile, and the like on privileged terms and get credit for the work produced by his staff.

He would be a figure of national prominence, but he would not be allowed to make a cent of personal profit from the inventions produced in his own office.

Thirdly, collectivism does offer to the masses advantages which they could never hope to obtain under an individualist or competitive system. Whereas America was colonized and built by people who could look after themselves and the modern American state was erected on that foundation, the Soviet government set out fourteen years ago to provide for 90 percent of the Russian population, which could not look after itself. And that is a considerable difference of viewpoint and a profound difference of fact.

In other words, one might say that in 1917 the great majority of young Americans were imbued with the competitive spirit both because they knew they had something to gain by it and knew that that something was attainable. The average healthy young Russian of 1917 had no knowledge of either. That again is a difference.

What, then, it may be asked, becomes of the exceptions to the average in Russia, of the dominant type that is not content to accept the lot of his fellows and wants and is able to get ahead? I make bold to say that in no country in the world are there such opportunities for this type as in the Soviet Union; that is, to get what this type wants—leadership, power, and the esteem of others.

In the United States it happens that these three desiderata are measured in terms of money, but no successful American in any branch of life will contradict the writer when he says money is only a yardstick or lever, not itself a desideratum. In Soviet Russia a strong and ambitious man can get all three without money. That is the final difference.

But, it may be asked, why, if that is the case, did Stalin stress greater wages for greater service? The answer is easier than it might be thought. This is a transitional stage in Russia and considerable remnants of the "old mentality" still exist, as the Kremlin recently found in regard to the state and collective farms.

What Stalin saw and wished to correct was an overhasty tendency to equalize wages in pursuit of "100 percent" communism at a time when, in fact, the collectivist system could not yet assure the masses of an adequate return for their labor or assure dominant individuals adequate recognition.

Stalin said there was no communism yet and even the penultimate step to communism—namely, socialism—was barely established. It is, therefore, necessary to maintain for some time to come direct monetary rewards to stimulate individual effort.

## FROM THE TSAR'S DIARY

Moscow, *December 6, 1927*.—Further excerpts from the Tsar's diary, now made public, disclose a mystified and pitiful interest in the Bolshevik revolution.

These entries were made at Tobolsk early in November 1917. On November 4 he writes:

"For the last two days no agency telegrams. Perhaps something important is happening in the big cities."

A week later, however, the imperial prisoner became alarmed at the absence of news. On November 11, he writes:

"For a long time no newspapers from Petrograd or even telegrams. In such parlous times that is ominous."

On November 13, he comments:

"At last telegrams from the army, but nothing from Petrograd."

On the following day, he says:

"Today is the birthday of dear mamma and the twenty-third anniversary of our marriage. At noon we heard prayers. The choir muddled and sang false, doubtless from lack of practice."

On November 17, the Tsar, having received definite news, writes:

"It is disgusting to read in the papers what happened a fortnight ago in Petrograd and Moscow. It is much worse and more shameful than the Troublous Times" (the period of medieval defeats by the Poles and Tatars).

It is unlikely that Nicholas realized what the new regime meant for him and his family or that he found conditions much changed for some time. Until the end of December the diary continues as before, recording his sawing wood, reading aloud, doing his lessons with Alexei, and rehearsing little French plays with the children.

## VOROSHILOV ON HIS FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY

Moscow, *February 9, 1931*.—Ten long books on Soviet Russia could not explain this country and its basic difference from the rest of the world so well as the brief reply of War Commissar Voroshilov to congratulations sent to him on his fiftieth birthday.

Commissar Voroshilov ranks near Joseph Stalin and Premier Molotov in the Bolshevik hierarchy. He is a member of the Politburo and is popular with the army and the people generally. His reply reads:

"To all the organizations and comrades who sent congratulations on the occasion of my fiftieth birthday:

"Comrades, I cannot find sufficiently strong words to answer the countless good wishes that have come and are still coming to me. I know that my class and its vanguard, our Leninist party, are uniquely 'to blame' for my position nowadays. To them—the working class and the party—first of all belong the honors addressed to me.

"For the last five years by the will of the party and the working class I have been directing the armed forces of our government. This extraordinarily responsible and onerous work I have been able to carry out only through the faithful management of the Leninist cen-

tral committee and because together with me have worked honorably and with enthusiasm all the officers and soldiers of the worker-peasant Red Army.

"Therefore, to them—soldiers and commanders—is due a great part of the attention with which you, comrades, have honored me on my fiftieth birthday. Speaking of myself, I was taught by the party and by Lenin, who built it. Under the management of the Leninist central committee and in faithful contact with Lenin's true disciple and carrier-on of his job, Comrade Stalin, I have worked all these years.

"So I shall work in the future, giving all my forces and if need be my body and my life for the party, for the proletariat, for my job and for communism. With comradely good wishes,

"K. VOROSHILOV."

## THE KREMLIN, CITY WITHIN A CITY

Moscow, *July 26, 1928*.—The Kremlin is not one palace but a city within a city, containing, besides the Winter Palace, thirty-two churches and a chapel, a military school, which is the Russian West Point, co-operative stores, apartments, tennis grounds, and the like.

All the churches are now museums where people are busy working on renovations and arrangements of the old armor, ecclesiastical treasures, vestments, icons, and altar cloths accumulated through centuries of the luxurious Orthodox hierarchy.

## DEFINITION OF A KULAK

Moscow, *October 5, 1929*.—What is a kulak? On the correct answer to that question depends the success of the gigantic rural socialization program undertaken by the Soviet.

"Kulak"—the word means fist—was long used by the poorer peasants to describe the prosperous, grasping peasant farmer who exploited his poorer fellow-villagers (nearly all Russian peasants live

in villages instead of on their farms, which gives the measure of their poverty) worse than any landlord.

In the early days after the revolution, when the Bolsheviki were fighting with the Social Revolutionary party for political control of rural communities, they picked up the hateful word to designate a certain class of the peasantry which opposed their attempt to organize the poor and landless men into Soviets that would co-operate with the urban proletariat.

During the years of militant communism "kulak" came to mean the man who hid his grain from government requisition. Then the Nep brought a change. Individual peasant proprietors were encouraged to produce grain for the cities which they could sell on the open market, and the term kulak was restricted to those who employed other men's labor for their own profit.

Theoretically, that definition holds good today, but in practice there has come another change. Kulak now means, as it meant before, the farmer who prefers to sell his produce at open market prices rather than hand over his grain to state collectors at "fixed prices," which average from two or three to five times lower.

Kulak, in short, means enemy—an anti-social element which places individual profit higher than common weal. As an enemy, he must be attacked and eliminated—so the Communist party has decreed. But uncertainty as to how to define him and persistence in the old definition as an employer of labor make the attack most difficult.

The grain collection program and the hitherto successful growth of collective farming are alike menaced by this enemy, who is all the more dangerous because he often does not correspond to his established labels.

At last the Communist party, the Soviet press, and public opinion are beginning to realize this and beginning to see that any collective or individual farmer who will not sell his grain at fixed prices is little less harmful to their scheme of rural socialization than the avowed kulak who sets fire to collective barns and buildings or shoots up the Communist president of the village Soviet—which is being done with a freedom that puts teeth in the phrase, "class war in the villages."



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